United Nations S/PV.4645

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4645th meeting

Tuesday, 12 November 2002, 10.15 a.m.

New York

President:	Zhang Yishan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-68655 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Prendergast: I last briefed the Council on 18 October. Since then, while the overall situation on the ground has remained essentially unchanged, there have been a number of significant political developments in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

Against the backdrop of a new Palestinian Cabinet taking office and the collapse of Israel's governing coalition, Israeli-Palestinian violence continues to claim lives on both sides nearly every day. Curfews and other restrictions on movement continue to impoverish increasing numbers of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Israel remains in the midst of its worst economic recession since 1953.

This week, various international meetings are taking place in the region in an effort to respond to the ongoing crisis in three critical areas. First, the Quartet Special Envoys met yesterday to work towards finalizing the road map to a comprehensive peace settlement, which is due to be adopted at a principals-level meeting of the Quartet in December. The Special Envoys, who had previously met on 24 October in Jerusalem, are working to revise the draft road map in the light of consultations with the Palestinians, the Government of Israel and other Governments in the region.

Secondly, the United Nations Special Coordinator, Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen, is convening a United Nations inter-agency meeting today to review the humanitarian plan of action prepared by a United Nations technical assessment mission that visited the region last month on the recommendation of the Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy, Ms. Catherine Bertini. The plan presents strategies for responding to the humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory. Representatives of the Palestinian Authority and the international aid community, as well as the Quartet Envoys, are also providing comments on the plan of action.

Thirdly, the Quartet's capitals-level Task Force on Palestinian Reform will convene in Jordan later this week, along with delegations from the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government. The Task Force will assess the progress of reforms following the conclusion of the "100 days plan" of the Palestinian Authority and will identify means of overcoming key obstacles to reform — particularly in sectors where there has been little progress in recent months, such as the civil service, judiciary, and elections.

The challenges on all of these fronts are formidable. Since my last briefing to the Council, some 46 Palestinians and 30 Israelis have been killed as of yesterday, and at least one more Palestinian has been killed since then. On 5 November, the Palestinian Authority issued a directive to all Fatah offices forbidding members of the movement from opening fire on Israelis "for any reason whatsoever", and the Authority has begun negotiations with Islamist factions intended to secure a commitment to end suicide operations.

As the Council knows, however, late on Sunday night a Palestinian gunman infiltrated Kibbutz Metzer in Israel and shot dead five Israelis, including two children sleeping in their beds. The Al-Aqsa Brigades of the Fatah movement are reported to have claimed responsibility. The Secretary-General has condemned that terrorist attack and has reiterated his concerns about the broader context of the ongoing cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians, including extrajudicial killings.

It bears repeating that terrorist attacks damage the Palestinian cause politically, as well as being morally unacceptable. If its orders are to have any credibility, the Palestinian Authority must take all measures within its power to apprehend and prosecute the gunmen responsible for this crime, as well as those who ordered them to carry it out, and to prevent the commission of further acts of terrorism.

Equally, it bears repeating that the Government of Israel must fully respect international humanitarian law in confronting terrorism. On Sunday morning, Israel announced that its soldiers had killed a Palestinian Islamic Jihad operative in Jenin, which Israeli forces had reoccupied two weeks earlier and where they demolished the homes of ten alleged militants and their families. Islamic Jihad immediately pledged to inflict an even more painful strike, as they described it, on Israel and have already claimed responsibility for an explosion on Sunday afternoon that killed an Israeli soldier in the Gaza Strip. Islamic Jihad also claimed responsibility for a suicide bomb attack against a bus near Hadera on 21 October that killed 14 Israelis and injured more than 40.

It is clear, therefore, that the distressing, self-perpetuating and ultimately futile pattern of violence shows no signs of abating. As I mentioned in my last briefing, settler violence against Palestinians, especially in connection with the harvesting of olives, is a growing problem. On 27 October, settlers attacked olive pickers from the village of Yanun, near Nablus, injuring four Palestinians, including two children, as well as four volunteers. In previous incidents, Palestinian olive pickers had been killed by settlers. As the Council knows, olives are the backbone of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank.

Israel's confiscation of thousands of dunums of agricultural land near the green line, so as to facilitate construction of its separation wall, is also heightening tensions. According to Israeli human rights organizations, the northern segment of the wall will leave at least eight villages, home to more than 10,000 Palestinians, stranded between the wall and the green line. And it will cut off access by West Bank residents to their agricultural land and water resources. Once completed, the wall could effectively annex approximately 7 per cent of the West Bank. Although Israel is entitled to safeguard the security of its citizens, it must do so without prejudicing the rights of Palestinians or pre-empting the contours of a permanent territorial settlement.

Moving to the humanitarian situation, curfews have been eased in a number of places in recent weeks, notably Ramallah and Hebron. However, residents of the Palestinian towns of Jenin, Nablus, Qalqilya, and Tulkarem continue to suffer, with curfews lasting an average of 17 hours a day. Strict restrictions on movement also remain in place for Palestinians travelling within the West Bank, and humanitarian personnel continue to face difficulties accessing Palestinian areas. In addition, ambulances are reportedly still facing lengthy delays at checkpoints — sometimes for as long as two and a half hours — despite the pledge first made to the Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy, Catherine Bertini, last August and repeated on subsequent occasions by Israeli authorities that ambulances would not be delayed longer than half an hour at each checkpoint, which would still be far too long.

Another humanitarian commitment by the Government of Israel was to facilitate the passage of water tankers inside the West Bank. Some 200 villages, with approximately 200,000 residents, are without a local source of water, at least during the dry months. The majority of those villages are located in Area C. In other words, they are under full Israeli civilian and security control, and are thus not served by the Palestinian Authority water networks. Villagers are dependent on water delivered daily by tankers for their household use and many also for their livelihoods. Israeli security forces continue to delay tankers severely or even outright prevent them from gaining access to villages. The consequence is that a regular supply of water is not assured. The United Nations has urged the Government of Israel to fulfil its pledge to Ms. Bertini to facilitate the delivery of water. Unfortunately, we observe no improvement.

On 29 October, the Palestinian Legislative Council gave a vote of confidence to a new Cabinet appointed by President Arafat. The Cabinet includes eight new ministers, three of whom were first appointed last June but never confirmed in office. By decree, the Cabinet will remain in office in a caretaker capacity until new elections are held.

Those elections are currently scheduled for 20 January, 2003. President Arafat has appointed a new electoral commission, which is chaired by a respected

independent. Many observers are, nevertheless, sceptical about the prospects of holding elections as soon as January, citing the absence of an approved legislative framework for elections and the difficulty of preparing for and holding elections while many West Bank cities remain under Israeli military occupation and are subject to severe restrictions on movement. The Palestinian people last had the chance to vote in January 1996. Everything possible should therefore be done to help ensure that elections can take place.

New elections in Israel will be held on 28 January, 2003. On 4 November, after failing to establish a new coalition Government following the departure of the Labour Party from the coalition, Prime Minister Sharon announced his decision to go to early elections within 90 days, and President Katzav dissolved the Knesset. Between now and the date of the elections, Labour and Likud will hold primary contests to select their candidates for Prime Minister.

I would like now, if I may, to turn to developments in Lebanon. Despite the reduced rhetoric and lower profile of the issue in both Lebanon and Israel, the Wazzani Springs water project continues to be a source of tension along the Blue Line. Since the last briefing to the Council, there has been constant diplomatic activity aimed at defusing tensions. The United States, the European Union and France have recently dispatched water experts to the region in order to work towards a resolution of the issue.

The United Nations has remained in close contact with all parties in an effort to facilitate a reduction in the level of tension. Certain media reports have indicated that, while water has begun to be drawn from the Wazzani Springs under the current project, the amount being pumped may, for the time being, be limited. Both sides should be encouraged to work towards a diplomatic resolution of the matter.

Israeli air violations continue to be a cause for concern. Israeli aircraft have continued to violate the Blue Line and Lebanese airspace, drawing anti-aircraft fire from the Lebanese side of the line. This anti-aircraft fire, and the shrapnel that it produces, continues to fall over northern Israeli towns and villages.

On 3 November, there was a marked increase in the number of air violations. It was reported that Israeli aircraft overflew southern Lebanon, the Bekaa valley and the capital city, Beirut. Again, those sorties were met with anti-aircraft fire.

Both the air violations and the ensuing anti-aircraft fire carry the potential for a deterioration of what is already a tense situation. All parties should be reminded of their obligations fully to respect the Blue Line and to refrain from all violations thereof.

The coming elections in Israel will consume a great deal of attention, both in the region and beyond, and there may be a temptation to suspend efforts on other fronts until they have been concluded. We cannot afford that luxury. As I argued during my last briefing, a deterioration of the situation on the ground only makes it more difficult to pursue our collective objective of a two-state solution. The maintenance of the status quo — with its high levels of violence, increasing human suffering and loss of life and steady erosion of even a minimum of mutual trust and respect — should not be an option, as this can only lead to a further worsening of conditions.

The current efforts of the Quartet and others to develop strategies for addressing simultaneously political, security, humanitarian and reform issues need the international community's full support and attention. In order to succeed, however, we need to pursue these efforts within a coherent framework to which the parties have agreed, and the parties need to stay the course and carry out long-standing commitments. For that reason it is of critical importance that the Quartet finalize its road map as soon as possible and then obtain the explicit agreement of both sides and of the international community to follow that map to a just, lasting settlement of this conflict.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Prendergast for his comprehensive briefing.

On behalf of the entire membership of the Council, I would like to bid farewell to the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Jean-David Levitte. I understand that our respected colleague, Ambassador Levitte, is here with us in this Chamber for the last time before he undertakes his next important assignment.

Ambassador Levitte has made important contributions to the work of the Council through diplomatic skills, an affable manner and a sense of collegiality which have made him a highly effective

representative of his country. I am certain that he will continue to use his talents in his new assignment. We will not forget our colleague Ambassador Levitte. He will be remembered as one who always strived to work in cooperation and harmony with other members of the Council. In bidding him a fond farewell, Council members, including myself, wish him great success and fulfilment in his future endeavours.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): This is an emotional moment for me, taking leave of my colleagues at this last public meeting in which I will have had the honour of having taken part.

Our Council has become somewhat a family for the 15 members who make it up. I think we probably spend more time together than we do with our real families. Our days and sometimes our nights are devoted to this life in common. I think that this work together helps us understand each other better, what we think in our deepest thoughts. This explains why the Council in recent months and years has made great progress in terms of credibility and effectiveness in its work. The results achieved with regard to Iraq are a particularly striking example of this. This strengthens the credibility and authority not just of the Council, but that of the United Nations. The Secretary-General's initiative on Cyprus, which we supported, is another example.

I would like to say a word about Africa, which is what takes up most of our time together. For me it was an honour to lead the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region. I think that the fragile progress made is a source of particular satisfaction for all Council members. We should never forget that it is in Africa that the most deadly conflicts continue. In the Great Lakes region alone, in four years there have been three million dead. Therefore I think that our duty is to continue tirelessly our efforts, because if the Security Council does not put all its energy in the African crisis, no one will do it in its place.

I will conclude my stay with you with the Middle East. Perhaps this is the most frustrating issue for members of the Council, the one on which we might express the most regret. Nevertheless, here again, I believe there are positive signs. The very fact that we are having a regular meeting at the initiative of Syria, following a proposal by Tunisia, is in itself a small encouraging sign. In the past we had to fight for weeks to simply have a briefing, but now it is something that seems quite natural. Be it with the Secretary-General or Sir Kieran Prendergast, or Terje Roed-Larson when he is in New York, we have an opportunity to take stock of the situation.

More generally, I think that the Quartet embodies the common will of the international community to fully play its role. Through resolution 1397 (2002), our Council plotted the way, that of two States living in peace, side by side, within secure and recognized boundaries. I believe our Council has to give its full support to the efforts of the Quartet. The road map that Sir Kieran referred to and which is to be adopted next month should receive the Council's support. We shall go back to this during our consultations. But on the case of the Middle East, it is clear that the Security Council must be able to play its full role.

I want to conclude by saying that I shall take with me to Washington not just the most friendly memories of our years of cooperation, but also the values that are incarnated in the United Nations Charter. As I said during the luncheon that the Ambassador of China organized for the Secretary-General a few days ago, if I had not been faithful to these United Nations values, I would be in material breach of my convictions.

Thanks to all of you, and it is only "au revoir", because I will be able to come back again to New York.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Ambassador of France for his comments. Just as he said, he did not do anything that constitutes a material breach of his conviction, whether open or hidden.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): Today's event reminds me of a similar one in January 2001, when we saw the departure of another Security Council superstar, named Richard Holbrooke. I remember that at that meeting it was, I think, Ambassador Levitte who tabled a resolution calling on the Security Council to persuade the United States to delay the departure of Ambassador Holbrooke. Unfortunately, Ambassador Holbrooke exercised his veto and the resolution was not carried. This is why I regret that France too has a veto in this Council, for otherwise we would take the lead in tabling a resolution calling on the Government of France to delay the posting of Ambassador Levitte from here.

Ambassador Levitte, as we all know, has become a truly indispensable member of, as he said, our family, and he has demonstrated tremendous leadership ability.

I, for one, will never forget what Jean-David did on our trips on the Great Lakes mission. I thought there were only twenty-four hours in a day, but under Jean-David, we worked twenty-eight hours a day — morning, day and night.

As Ambassador Levitte said, the most crucial issues we face now are the Middle East and Iraq, and on both we can say that Ambassador Levitte has shown great leadership. I see that *The New York Times* Week in Review section has finally recognized his contribution by giving him a series of photographs that I think may earn him a distinction as being the only Ambassador who has been profiled in that way. It is a well deserved profile. We wish him all the best in his assignment. As he said in his own words just now, this is "au revoir" and "à bientôt".

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4646

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4646th meeting

Thursday, 14 November 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yishan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2002/1223).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-69275 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2002/1223)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Chile, Denmark, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Ukraine in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Dauth (Australia), Mr. Valdés (Chile), Ms. Løj (Denmark), Mr. Naidu (Fiji), Mr. Nambiar (India), Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Mr. Haneda (Japan), Mr. MacKay (New Zealand), Mr. Macieira (Portugal), Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea), Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand) and Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation, under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, to Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Sharma to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1223, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in Timor-Leste.

I now call on Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, to introduce the report.

Mr. Sharma: It is a pleasure to appear before the Security Council, particularly as I feel I am among old friends.

In the Secretary-General's first report to the Council on Timor-Leste (S/2002/1223), which is before members, we look to the prospects of the new State with positive expectation and optimism. The report is divided into six sections, highlighting, following an introductory section, the activities of the national authorities since independence; the contributions of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) in the three major programme areas set out in the report contained in document S/2002/432; the role being played by the wider United Nations system and other partners; and financial aspects. In conclusion, the report makes some observations and recommendations. I trust that the report will provide a useful basis for the deliberations of the Council on this issue.

Timor-Leste has many favourable features which should assist in securing its future. It is a compact country of 15,000 square kilometres, with considerable ethnic and social cohesion, which has been further intensified by the common experience of history, both distant and recent, which has sharpened that identity. That compactness is both geographical and demographic. It has a population of about 820,000. Put another way, assuming an average size of a family of five, it is a country of about 165,000 families.

That culturally cohesive population is endowed with significant resources to safeguard its economic future. Two gas and oil fields, ready for exploitation, have enormous potential for revenue, and there is evidence of on-shore hydrocarbon potential as well. A study has indicated the presence of six metallic ores in commercial quantities, which is remarkable in relation

to the size of the country. The coastline of more than 700 kilometres, large in relation to the size of the country, is commercially exploitable for fisheries. While the terrain is generally hilly, the soil offers considerable agricultural potential in a variety of crops through modernized inputs and techniques. There are interesting prospects particularly for eco-tourism and adventure tourism. The country is, therefore, considerably well endowed in its resource base.

There is also the factor of a favourable locational advantage. Although one of the least developed countries — indeed, according to current human development indicators, it is now among the poorest group of countries in the world — Timor-Leste is not part of a depressed, but rather of a prosperous, neighbourhood. In this, it does not have the disadvantage of many others among the group of least developed countries. Countries to the east and west of Timor-Leste are either developed or represent a very dynamic economic region. Timor-Leste can, therefore, be buoyed by that region, rich in both human and trading resources, by pursuing the right policies.

Another significant asset is the leadership of Timor-Leste, which enjoys international goodwill and recognition to an exceptional degree. President Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Jose Ramos-Horta enjoy respect and esteem in world capitals, which has assisted in the creation of a prominent international profile for the country and has prepared favourable ground for a wide network of international cooperation, from which the nascent State can derive benefit in a variety of ways.

It is true that expectations from the leadership, which faces expressions of impatience and expectation in a variety of areas, run high within the population. In a new democracy, that in itself is a healthy phenomenon, given the fact that Timor-Leste has committed itself to the highest expected standards of a responsive and participative democratic polity and to the independence of various fundamental organs of the State and has made a commitment to unfettered standards of human rights, core freedoms and a free press. The population of Timor-Leste shows itself to be zealous in protecting those rights, and the growth of opposition voices is a natural fruition of the democratic political process.

A key ingredient in the country's political and economic environment is its evolving relationship with Indonesia. That has been among the most positive lines, with political commitment and goodwill demonstrated at the highest political levels on both sides. The first meeting of the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation established between Timor-Leste and Indonesia has provided the impulse for the growth of the relationship along a wide front, and cooperation between the two countries on the question of the return of refugees from West Timor has been exemplary. The success of that collaboration in the repatriation of what constituted nearly a quarter of the population of Timor-Leste, with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is an accomplishment that has perhaps not received as much public attention as it merits.

Lastly, Timor-Leste enjoys exceptional engagement and participation by the world community in offering partnership to this new entrant to the community of nations as it builds its future. The nature of the involvement of the United Nations has been unique and long-standing, both through the missions established by the Council and through the active presence of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The participation and constructive engagement of international financial institutions, development banks, the multilateral and bilateral donor community, neighbouring countries and civil society generate confidence that the third successive United Nations mission can anticipate the successful termination of its mandate in mid-2004 confident that, thereafter, Timor-Leste will advance securely on its own towards an increasingly prosperous and stable future.

The balance of accomplishment and challenge is reflected in the report of the Secretary-General presented to the Council. I would like to indicate briefly what I consider are the principal challenges before the State, in a perspective that is largely shared by the Government of Timor-Leste.

Effective policies to demonstrate and secure the rule of law, particularly in the context of the country's historical experience, is a core challenge. As President Xanana Gusmão observed in his address after 100 days of independence: "If justice in Timor is going badly, then everything else will go less well".

Together with the rule of law, I consider expansion of employment opportunity, particularly for the youth, of which 90 per cent are reportedly unemployed, as the principal independence dividend for the people of Timor-Leste, to advance which a variety of channels should be created. The goal should be to assist the society in becoming one of job creators, and not merely job seekers.

Particular stress needs to be placed on the mental and professional orientation of young people and on helping expose them to the contemporary knowledge industry and services. The idea of an interactive science park is being pursued through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Prospects of a livelihood and technology resource centre, professional and financial assistance and basic business education are also being explored.

Regarding development, the National Development Plan, with external partnership, needs to show consistent gains in the social agenda of nutrition, health, literacy and gender equality, hand in hand with infrastructure rehabilitation and income growth.

Regarding democratic culture in depth, participative and transparent democratic processes need to be strengthened at decentralized levels; this is receiving attention. This would also contribute to bridging the rural-urban divide, which is another significant challenge.

With regard to institution building, the quality of all institutions being built and their public-spiritedness, professionalism, neutrality and transparency will be the key to the quality of governance provided by the State. The subservience of military and police authorities to civilian democratic control must be safeguarded. Certain incidents that have occurred are being dealt with firmly and in a decisive manner in this spirit.

Concerning aid absorption, Timor-Leste has been a beneficiary of significant international assistance. While this needs to be continued and enhanced in specific sectors, the absorptive capacity must also be strengthened so that the impact of the assistance available is maximized.

Members may be wondering when I will make a reference to the specific mandate from the Council. I have deliberately stressed the nation-building aspect of the mandate across a broad front as UNMISET plays the role of both enabler and facilitator of meeting larger political, social and economic goals and implements the precise mandate in external and internal security and support to various branches of public administration. The goal of UNMISET at the end of its mission, and of the larger body of well-wishers to Timor-Leste, is to enable Timor-Leste to emerge as a State in full possession of the all attributes of sovereignty — a State that is stable and increasingly prosperous and that is making steady advances in continuing partnership with external institutions, friendly Governments and civil society.

The specific aspects of UNMISET's mandate have received, and will continue to be accorded, our concentrated attention. In a situation where capacity in public administration has to be built across the board from the ground up, the situation will remain challenging for a long time to come. However, I believe that a satisfactory start has been made, with 86 of the 100 stability positions filled and the rest in the pipeline. Earlier this month, a special interactive seminar was arranged in which the Prime Minister and a large number of ministers participated to review and strengthen the contribution to self-reliance of those stability posts. However, the filling of the 228 "development" posts, which is being coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) remains to be accelerated, as only about a quarter have been filled. We appeal to partner countries for a renewed support effort. The policy of having the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General act as UNDP Resident Coordinator has been successful, as Mr. Hasegawa, who brings long experience to his task, is playing a central role in supporting the governance and development agenda of Timor-Leste.

In the area of internal security, 4 out of 13 districts have already been handed over to the Timor-Leste Police Service, and the schedule to hand over complete territorial responsibility by January 2004, and thereafter headquarters functions by the end of the UNMISET mandate, is on course. I have confidence in the motivation and dedication of the 2,830-strong police force, of which all but about 300 have been recruited and nearly 80 per cent, or 2,285, have been trained. It is worth noting that about 20 per cent of the force will be comprised of women, which is an exceptionally high number and represents an important factor in gender sensitivity in the police force, which is an important requirement in Timor-Leste. It will be

necessary to maintain the integrity and pride of these forces, which will be a pillar of the State.

On handing over external security responsibility to the defence forces of Timor Leste, we also expect to maintain the drawdown schedule and complete the transfer by the middle of 2004. The eastern-most district of Lautem has already been handed over. With the bilateral decisions recently taken by Timor-Leste and Indonesia at the Joint Commission meeting in October 2002 and the timetable established by the two sides to agree on a line that constitutes the land border — in accordance with which the land border can be demarcated unequivocally — together with processes under way for bilaterally establishing a cooperative border regime in its trading, customs, immigration and security aspects, the groundwork for a stable and friendly external environment has been well prepared.

In that connection, I would like to express my appreciation for the services of Ambassador Lakhan Mehrotra, Director of the UNMISET Office in Jakarta, whose term with UNMISET is drawing to a close. Both the Government of Timor-Leste and the Government of Indonesia have lavishly acknowledged his exceptional contribution.

A new shadow has fallen over the region that adds to the security challenge. That shadow is terrorism, which constitutes more than a passing threat. The terrorist outrage in Bali, and audio tapes made by terrorists, further point towards the need for the enhanced vigilance and improved capacities of Timor-Leste to effectively deal with this emerging challenge. There is also a need to put in place protective and institutional measures to reduce vulnerability, without causing public alarm or insecurity. In that regard, the assistance of external expertise should be made available, if requested.

I value this opportunity for an interchange with members of the Council, and look forward to receiving their guidance.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his thorough and in-depth report on Timor-Leste. I also want to say how pleased I am to see Kamalesh Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), at the Council table. He is a very experienced diplomat and it is truly encouraging to see the Secretary-General represented in Timor-Leste by someone of his calibre. I wish to thank him for his very interesting presentation on the report of the Secretary-General.

As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement to be made by Denmark on behalf of the Union. I would therefore like to make some comments in my national capacity.

I would like to say that my delegation welcomes the fact that in the first five months since Timor-Leste's declaration of independence there has been tangible and lasting progress in the establishment and strengthening of nascent State institutions. The security situation is improving, good-neighbourly relations are continuing to be developed, in particular with Indonesia, and the new State is becoming increasingly integrated into the international community and regional organizations. Such success would not have been possible had it not been for both the efforts of the new Government and the indispensable assistance of concerned States and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

We should recognize the remarkable progress made in the transfer of functions from UNMISET to the new Timorese Administration, including the police.

We support UNMISET's efforts to implement its mandate under Security Council resolution 1410 (2002) within the established time frame. Bulgaria welcomes the effort to optimize the international presence in Timor-Leste by downsizing administrative personnel and better coordinating the international assistance received by the country.

Good-neighbourly relations are at the very heart of the stability and economic development of Timor-Leste and of its becoming a part of the international community. We have already welcomed the creation by Timor-Leste and Indonesia of the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation to take up remaining problems between the two countries, inter alia, delimitation and demarcation of the border and the return of Timorese refugees. We welcome the decision to maintain the Joint Border Committee, and we call upon the parties to continue their efforts to reach agreement on delimitation and demarcation of the border as soon as possible.

My country also welcomes the decision by the Timor-Leste Government to sign a communiqué

identifying 11 human rights goals. This is a clear commitment by political leaders to shoulder their responsibilities in defending human rights and developing democracy in the young country.

The progress in the country's management is without question a good beginning for Timor-Leste, but serious, unresolved problems remain: there is a shortage of administrative capacity, particularly affecting the judiciary system; a truly modern infrastructure is lacking; and social stability remains fragile and the country faces the problem of the reintegration of ex-combatants and the return of refugees.

My country highly appreciates the active role and personal commitment of the Secretary-General in the effective coordination of activities of the United Nations system in Timor-Leste.

I would like to conclude by once again paying tribute to Ambassador Sharma and his team for the work they have done. I thank them all for their excellent work. I convey my deep sympathy to the families of peacekeepers who were victims of the terrorist attack perpetrated in Bali.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): It is with real pleasure that my delegation welcomes Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma to this public meeting on the occasion of his presentation of the first six-monthly report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/1223) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Cameroon wishes to tell the Special Representative of the Secretary-General how very much we appreciate the exceptional work accomplished in such a brief period of time. I would like at the same time to thank the Secretary-General for the high calibre of this full, precise and most informative report.

Since 20 May 2002, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has given evidence of extraordinary dynamism both at the domestic level and in terms of foreign policy. In the national sphere, the new authorities of Timor-Leste are, above all, working to assume their functions. This obviously entails developing national capacities, in particular, in the important justice, police and defence sectors. The strengthening of human and institutional capacities in Timor-Leste also relates to areas that are particularly decisive for development, such as education and training, health and agricultural development.

With the support of UNMISET and bilateral donors, substantial progress has been made since 20 May 2002 in capacity-building in all areas. Cameroon is particularly pleased to be participating in this UNMISET success story, be it through coordination or capacity-building in the legal, health, agricultural development or communications fields.

My delegation shares the concerns expressed in the report regarding the establishment of a competent and independent judiciary in Timor-Leste, and we endorse the relevant suggestions made in the report in this regard.

The other topic that I would like to raise is that of the police and defence. Cameroon notes with pleasure that the new Timor-Leste Police Service is already responsible for four out of the 13 districts. This leads us to hope that by January 2004, as scheduled, the maintenance of law and order will be fully in the hands of the Timorese police. In the meantime, we welcome the remarkable work being done on a daily basis by UNMISET's civilian police component which is both maintaining law and order and successfully fulfilling its important role in advising and training the local police.

Still on the questions of security, I would like to emphasize the positive development regarding the external security and the territorial integrity of Timor-Leste. This, of course, is primarily the result of the work done by the Timorese Government, but the results also are to the credit of the military component of UNMISET and of the Indonesian armed forces. The triangular cooperation among these three structures has undoubtedly made it possible to improve and to ensure a climate of stability and security with West Timor. It is clear that if this progress is further strengthened as time goes by, the Security Council's goal of gradually reducing the United Nations military presence within a reasonable time period can be successful.

I would like, in conclusion, to refer to two aspects that I believe are decisive to the future and to the economic and social progress of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. In the international sphere, four major initiatives should be emphasized in view of their present and future impact on the political and legal shape of Timor and on Timor's development. These are, first, the admission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations on 27 September 2002 — a symbolic event but, above all, a major diplomatic act. My

country supported it, and we are preparing to establish our own diplomatic relations with that country in the coming weeks.

There is also the fact that Timor-Leste participated in last July's Fiji Summit of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. This is a prelude to Timor-Leste's joining the Cotonou Agreement with the European Union. We should also emphasize the political judgement and insight of the Timorese authorities that led them very quickly to normalize their relations with their two neighbours which cannot be ignored, Australia and Indonesia. Those two countries and their Governments also deserve, together with the Dili authorities, to be commended and encouraged in the steps that they have taken to maintain economic relations, friendship and cooperation with Timor-Leste based on constructive dialogue, trust and mutual benefit. It is, indeed, indispensable to turn the page and to start again on a new foundation.

Last but not least, the action of the international community is essential to the promotion of Timor-Leste's endogenous and sustained development. Therefore, I should like to reiterate a pressing appeal to the various donors — made explicitly by the Secretary-General in his report — not only that they maintain their support for this young nation, but also, and above all, that they substantially increase their support for Timor-Leste so that, very soon, the country will be able to fly, surely and with dignity, on its own wings.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2002/1223), which provides a detailed account of the work carried out during the reporting period by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) to implement Security Council resolution 1410 (2002). It also gives an accurate account of the main problems facing the establishment of statehood in Timor-Leste.

In Timor-Leste, the Organization has acquired truly unique experience, first in helping to prepare for independence and then in assisting with the formation of the young State. We must ensure that that experience — which has undoubtedly already gone down in history as a shining example of a successful effort by the United Nations — is further enriched.

The new institutions of State administration in Timor-Leste are not yet firmly in place, and it is quite clear that, in order to strengthen them — particularly in the initial period after the proclamation of independence — the international community must continue to provide support for this youngest of all States. In that connection, we welcome UNMISET's efforts to assist in the establishment of Timor-Leste's statehood, and we would emphasize the need to strengthen support in the donor community for that process.

The key problems being addressed by the Mission certainly include determining how to help to ensure external and internal security for the new State. Until full responsibility for security is transferred to the national army and police, Mission personnel must ensure that conditions are in place that will exclude any possibility of destabilization in the country, which could undermine independence. We welcome the broadening of the areas of responsibility for Timor-Leste's army and police, which are now being trained. That will help to ensure the reduction and withdrawal of UNMISET's military contingent on schedule and without any particularly serious complications. We think it important that the leadership of Timor-Leste continue to demonstrate unity and pursue its policy of establishing good-neighbourly relations with contiguous countries.

Support for social and economic development in Timor-Leste by multilateral and bilateral donors is crucially important to long-term stability in the country. Therefore, we welcome UNMISET's assistance to the Government as it seeks to attain the goals of the National Development Plan by working on priorities in the political, socio-economic and humanitarian fields.

In conclusion, we wish every further success to Special Representative Kamalesh Sharma and to all other Mission personnel as they seek to consolidate the positive progress that has already been achieved in assisting the young State of Timor-Leste.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly on this subject by Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

I should like to express a very warm welcome back to the Council to Ambassador Sharma and to

commend him on the excellent start that he has made as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

We are very much pleased to see the Secretary-General's report (S/2002/1223) and are grateful for that and for the clear and informative briefing that we have had today. The United Kingdom is very much encouraged by the progress that has been achieved in Timor-Leste since independence, and we should like the Special Representative to convey the thanks of the Council to the whole UNMISET team for what they have achieved, both before and after independence.

In addition, we express our sympathies for the families of the victims of the Bali bombing.

The report and the briefing together set out an approach that the United Kingdom fully supports for Timor-Leste. We also welcome the continued commitment by the Government to achieving the objectives set out by the Security Council in resolution 1410 (2002), but it is clear that there are many tough challenges still ahead. We are particularly aware that urgent action is needed to alleviate poverty, to improve employment and to strengthen the still-fragile institutions.

I should like to go through a number of detailed points. We welcome the news that 86 of the 100 stability posts have now been filled, but we are still concerned that only a quarter of the 228 development posts have thus far been filled. We urge UNMISET to deal with those as quickly as possible — particularly the posts for which it has already secured funding — and if the Special Representative could give us some sense of a time frame for that, it would be useful. We hope that international experts working in Timor-Leste will focus on training their Timorese counterparts rather than on trying to do the job themselves. That is an important aspect of capacity-building.

On the economic side, we understand from the International Monetary Fund — which is currently visiting Timor-Leste — that it estimates a shortfall of between $60 million and $80 million in the budget up to mid-2005 and that it is also expecting the economic situation to worsen in the second two years of this triennium, in 2004 and 2005, which will clearly affect the social safety nets. So we would be grateful to learn a bit more about the assessment of the United Nations as to the current economic and budgetary situation and what needs to be done to address it.

I note that the rule of law is the first of what the Special Representative considers the principal challenges that the new State faces. There are reminders of our experience in the Balkans echoing here. Respect for human rights and for the rule of law is crucial for Timor-Leste's future. We therefore welcome the establishment of the *Provedor* office, but we are concerned at the suggestion that the Judicial Magistrates Statutes do not provide sufficiently for the independence of judges and lawyers. I would be grateful to know whether anything is being planned to remedy that.

We look forward to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assessment mission and to the provision of a suggested road map of assistance for the justice sector by the Portuguese justice sector expert on the World Bank monitoring mission. A review of all pre-trial detentions is clearly needed, and we are especially concerned about the 10 juveniles currently in detention. We welcome the recent indictments issued by the Serious Crimes Unit, especially for members of the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) suspected of murdering Dutch journalist Sander Thoenes. The poor performance in attracting forensic pathologists needs to be addressed. The mandate implementation plan of 10 priority cases needs to be completed quickly to increase the chances of successful reconciliation. I would like to ask whether the Special Representative has any suggestions for what can be done about serious crimes which fall outside the remit of the mandate implementation plan, because we believe these could undermine work on the plan.

We look forward to the multi-donor mission to Timor-Leste next week to look at the needs of the national police. We are pleased that the transfer of responsibility to the national police is proceeding well; it is important that the police should be fully capable of maintaining law and order when the time comes for UNMISET's departure. Finally, we would be interested in knowing whether the United Nations has any plans to revise its phase-five security status for West Timor.

I end by repeating our thanks to UNMISET for its work and giving, through Mr. Sharma, our best wishes to them and to the Government of Timor-Leste for the coming period.

Mr. Williamson (United States of America): We appreciate the progress achieved in the first six months of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the good work done by Ambassador Sharma and his staff. We welcome Ambassador Sharma's assessment that the mission phase-out remains on target for June 2004. Over the next 18 months we hope that the relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia will continue to flourish. We encourage both sides to continue their cooperation to delineate their mutual border by June of next year.

The United States agrees with the Secretary-General's report that the functioning of the Timor-Leste justice system is of central importance for the stability and development of the State. Therefore, we are concerned about the shortcomings of the judicial system highlighted in the report: a lack of clarity regarding the separation of powers among the judiciary, the legislature and the executive; the members of the Superior Counsel of the Judiciary have not been appointed, thereby delaying the filling of judicial and prosecutorial vacancies; there is a need for capacity-building for the administrative staff of the Minister's office; there is a need to train prosecutors; and so on.

The report said the majority of the prison population is being held for prolonged periods without trial and that on 16 August during prison disturbances nearly 193 prisoners forced their way out of the prison. That is also troubling. We hope and expect that the Government of Timor-Leste, working with UNMISET, will seriously tackle these areas of concern in the judicial sector.

We note that the downsizing of the military component is on track. The United States is pleased that the United Nations is committed to terminating the Mission in the summer of 2004, provided that no significant challenges occur. Indonesia no longer presents a significant threat to Timor-Leste. There have been no recent United Nations military engagements with the militia, or even sightings of them in Timor-Leste. The United Nations has demonstrated its ability to adapt UNMISET's downsizing plan to an unforeseen delay in the normalization of the border with West Timor. The evolving situation in Timor-Leste — continued reduction of the militia threat but delays in the border normalization — highlights the need for constant review and reassessment of United Nations downsizing plans for UNMISET.

The United Nations reassessment of the changing situation in Timor-Leste can be a model for the United Nations to follow with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). In the case of UNMISET, the United Nations assessment found a solution that permitted a continuation of its original projected downsizing rate, whereas if additional challenges had been presented the United Nations might have been forced to recommend a decrease in the rate of withdrawal and perhaps to extend the projected mission termination date. The United States commends UNMISET and the Government of Timor-Leste for their agility and for this progress.

The Security Council is united in its commitment to a Timor-Leste with both political independence and the infrastructure of a stable, just and efficiently governed State. The progress has been remarkable. While, as I have noted, there is more that needs to be accomplished, overall Timor-Leste is a great success story, and there are lessons to be learned from this progress. Therefore, six months into UNMISET, we think it is constructive to reflect on the factors behind the good news we have heard today. Why have the United Nations efforts in Timor been a success? A number of reasons come to mind.

First and foremost, the brave people of Timor-Leste deserve credit for their dedication and hard work, and for their commitment to achieving independence, to letting democracy take root and to building institutions in the economy necessary for a better future for themselves and their children. The Timor-Leste leaders should be acknowledged for their good work. Any sustainable progress must be constructed on the hopes of the people coupled to their dedication to translate those hopes into reality.

Second, however, there was overwhelming consensus and support in the international community and among the Timorese for the initial intervention and the United Nations assumption of administrative powers.

Third, both peacekeeping missions — the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and UMISET — have had a clear end game. For UNTAET it was political independence. For UNMISET it has been to provide the training wheels to

help the Timorese build their own functioning administration, civil service, police and security force.

Fourth, after the initial intervention there were no major armed groups for the peacekeepers to disarm.

Fifth, the peacekeeping force was highly professional and operated under robust rules of engagement. There was no prospect of Blue Helmets becoming human shields.

Sixth, the relatively small size of Timor-Leste, with a population of under 1 million and a land border with only one neighbour made the logistics of establishing security and administration more manageable. Compare this to a vast country like Afghanistan, with its 20 million people, and the point becomes clearer.

Seventh, the local population always has had a strong cohesive sense of national identity less driven by ethnic and religious strife than elsewhere.

And eighth, the lack of lust for revenge and reprisal among the Timorese has enabled a smooth return and reintegration of the vast majority of refugees who fled the violence in 1999.

While the combination of those circumstances may be unique, collectively they set a standard of success that future United Nations operations should seek to follow. Over the next 18 months we look forward to UNMISET continuing to be a success, a success with lessons upon which we should draw and, most important, a success that will bring a better life to the people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to extend my profound thanks to Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste, for his comprehensive and useful briefing this morning and for the efforts he is exerting along with all the workers of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). We wish him all success in his performance and in the important mission he has been entrusted with.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the United Nations Mission in East Timor, which is of particular importance because it is the first report that deals with the developments in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste in the wake of their independence on 20 May 2002 and the establishment of the Mission.

We would like to express our satisfaction at the fact that Timor-Leste has joined the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, and that it has established diplomatic relations with all the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

The report highlights a number of challenges, most of which relate to the lack of necessary resources, the importance of funding and the need for continued support by donors. We therefore appeal to all the donors to maintain their support for Timor-Leste's current rebuilding and development programme and to assist the Government in its efforts to formulate and achieve the objectives of the national development plan.

Syria therefore concurs with the report's assertion that multilateral aid from donors aimed at achieving socio-economic prosperity in Timor-Leste is a vital prerequisite for the long-term stability of that country.

We would like to express our concern about the slow rate of refugee return since the end of June, and we agree with the report that a resolution of that problem is necessary for the stability of the country.

Syria welcomes the general improvements referred to in the report with regard to the state of external security and border monitoring and the need to ensure a stable and secure environment. This has been made possible by the intensive presence of the military components of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) at the borders, as well as by consultation, cooperation and continued coordination with the Mission's counterparts in the Indonesian force in West Timor.

We continue to look forward to agreement on demarcation and the implementation of joint obligations, as declared by Timor-Leste and Indonesia, which would allow UNMISET to downsize its presence and, finally, to withdraw.

Mr. Gokool (Mauritius): My delegation, like others, also extends a warm welcome to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, and thanks him for his informative briefing in introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). We commend the Special

Representative for the excellent manner in which he has steered the work of UNMISET since its inception, and we wish him and his team much success in the fulfilment of the Mission's mandate and in addressing the principal challenges that confront the young island State and to which he has just referred.

We are pleased to note that the Government of Timor-Leste and its national institutions have assumed responsibility for the management and conduct of its affairs. The report clearly highlights the developments in Timor-Leste after independence. We take note of the progress towards the promotion of a broad-based democracy in Timor-Leste through the establishment of legislative, executive and judicial structures. An effective and functioning democracy must have necessary safeguards for the protection of human rights and the promotion of the rule of law. We are particularly pleased to see that the protection of human rights in Timor-Leste is being institutionalized. We are confident that the office of the "*Provedor*" will carry out its activities in the most professional manner.

It is heartening to learn that the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, established to facilitate reconciliation with justice, has commenced its operational phase. A country that has suffered from so much trauma and been subjected to untold hardships cannot embark on nation-building without justice being seen to be done. Nation-building is never complete without a consolidated, united and peace-loving society. In this regard, Mauritius believes that more is required in order to encourage longer-term reconciliation among the Timorese. Importance must, therefore, be given to nation-building, capacity-building and institution-building.

The strong commitment of the Security Council and the international community has been instrumental in the success achieved so far in Timor-Leste. As the report observes, it is important that the Security Council and the donor community remain engaged, so as to build upon the outstanding contribution that has been made to date. The Security Council should therefore continue to support the country in order to preserve and promote its political and economic independence.

It is undeniabie that without a strong and well-equipped public administration it would be difficult to implement the programmes of the Government. The challenges mentioned in paragraphs 11, 12 and 13 must therefore be addressed as soon as possible in order to maintain the stability and move forward with the developmental process. We hope that the donor community will make additional efforts by providing the funding required to enable the commitments to materialize. We fully agree that the support of multilateral and bilateral donors in ensuring the economic and social well-being of Timor-Leste is vital for the long-term stability of the country.

We welcome the progress made so far in the Timorization process in all sectors, particularly in the police and defence forces. It is encouraging to learn that a total of 2,285 Timor-Leste Police Service officers are now serving their country. We fully support this process and hope that the joint assessment mission, planned to take place this month with the involvement of the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations and donor countries, will come up will proposals that will address the needs of the Timor-Leste Police Service. We are happy to note that the first phase of the four-phase downsizing programme will be completed as planned by the end of November, and we hope that the national defence force will become fully operational by June 2004.

The resolution of the refugee problem is, indeed, a matter of high priority. No effort should be spared to accelerate the voluntary return of refugees who remain in West Timor. The extremely low return rate registered in October is a matter of concern. We commend the initiative of President Gusmão to make a personal appeal to the refugees to return. The process of reconciliation and nation-building will be more effectively consolidated by the voluntary return of the refugees and by providing them with the necessary facilities for their full integration into society.

My delegation is gratified at the pace at which Timor-Leste is forging its relationships abroad. We are pleased to note that it has established diplomatic relations with almost all States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and has become a member of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. As a small island State, Timor-Leste needs the support of the international and regional communities in its economic reconstruction efforts and in building a solid, united and peaceful country.

My delegation takes particular note of the constructive approach demonstrated by President Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia. The creation of a Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation to address issues of mutual concern in the maintenance of the Joint Border Committee is a real and significant step forward. This shows the genuine commitment of both countries to the success and prosperity of Timor-Leste.

Finally, let me commend the people of Timor-Leste and its leaders for their undying spirit in rebuilding their country. Although their road to independence was long and difficult, the resilience and true dedication of the people of Timor-Leste for the well-being of their country will certainly make that small island State a prosperous and peaceful place to live.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank Mr. Sharma for his statement and for the excellent work that he has been doing. France fully associates itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union, but I would like to add a few comments.

First, I should like to reiterate our satisfaction with the work done by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Three goals were set for the Mission, and, to a large extent, they have been attained.

The first task involves the transfer of policing responsibility. The process is moving forward on schedule and should be completed by January 2004, in keeping with the timetable.

The second task is the establishment of a national defence force. We welcome the beginning of the process of the transfer of power and look forward to its completion by 2004. In that connection, we note that the question of refugees in West Timor no longer seems to pose a threat to stability in the region.

The third task relates to the consolidation of the Administration. Here prospects are less clear, naturally, because this is a most important and sensitive issue. Institutions seem to be functioning well, and the relations between the President, the Government and the Parliament, elected in August 2000, appear to be satisfactory. But there are still disturbing shortcomings in connection with the judiciary, and prison administration in particular, and solutions must be found as quickly as possible. In the short term, this will require further efforts to complete recruitment of Timorese civil servants. In more general terms, with respect to institutional matters, political pluralism must continue to be encouraged.

Above and beyond the work of UNMISET, the future and long-term prosperity of Timor-Leste seems to us to depend, inter alia, on three factors.

First, efforts towards rebuilding and economic development must be redoubled — a point that several members made earlier. International assistance and mobilization must therefore continue. In this connection, we reiterate the appeals made by others.

The second factor relates to the judiciary. It is important that there be a certain consistency between the decisions taken with respect to serious crimes, whether such decisions are taken in Dili or in Jakarta. We are aware of the concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights with respect to the ad hoc human rights tribunal in Jakarta. In the wake of the tragic events that took place in Timor-Leste, the judiciary system in both countries has a paramount role to play in ensuring full and lasting reconciliation. In this connection, I share the concerns that have already been expressed on this score.

The third factor — the establishment of good relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours, in particular Indonesia — is a positive factor, and we are pleased at how things are proceeding in this respect. The Joint Ministerial Commission, together with Indonesia, began work last month, and initially promising results have been achieved. I should like to ask a few questions of Mr. Sharma on this point.

Could he tell us what is happening with respect to the important issues of compensation and the right to assets? Has the Joint Commission addressed these issues? Are people becoming more receptive to the zero option advocated by Mr. Sharma? And lastly, could the Special Representative tell us more about the demarcation of the land and sea borders between the two countries?

I would now conclude my statement by simply reiterating our very positive assessment of the work being done by the United Nations in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): May I first of all thank the Secretary-General for his first report on Timor-Leste. On behalf of my delegation, I should like also to welcome to the Council Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for East Timor, and to express our appreciation for the useful information he has just given us. We commend him for the excellent work that he and his team have done on the ground in such a short period.

At the public meeting of the Security Council on 20 May 2002, my delegation stated that, with Timor-Leste's independence, a new era was opening up for the country. We noted the tremendous amount of work that lay ahead of the new authorities and stressed the need for the international community to remain engaged in supporting the efforts being made.

Six months have elapsed now, and my delegation is pleased to see that a great deal of progress has been achieved thanks to the work done by the people there, the leaders of Timor-Leste and the international community.

However, many challenges remain that must be dealt with to enable that young State to shoulder all of its responsibilities.

The report under consideration tells us how the situation is evolving on the ground and discusses the responsibilities of the various players with respect to strengthening what has been achieved and developing Timor-Leste. My delegation welcomes the efforts made to ensure the proper functioning of national institutions and to promote a participatory democracy that reflects the concerns of the Timorese. It welcomes Timor-Leste's joining the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries.

The elaboration of a regulatory and technical framework for the development of the natural resources of the country, in particular oil and gas, is a prerequisite for resolving the socio-economic problems of the country. We note also the contribution made by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1410 (2002).

Programme I, on stability, democracy and justice, suffers from some technical shortcomings that require our attention. Programme II, on internal security and law enforcement, has resulted in a drop in crime, thanks to the unified chain of command of the United Nations police and the Timor-Leste Police Service. In this connection, we support the continuation of the training programme, so as to ensure the successful transfer of power from the United Nations police to the Timor-Leste Police Service.

Programme III concerns external security and border control. In this respect, my delegation welcomes the joint efforts made by the Governments of Timor-Leste and of Indonesia, inter alia to put an end to crime and to maintain an atmosphere of stability. In that connection, we believe that settling the question of refugees is more necessary now than ever before.

We also welcome the launching of the National Development Plan for Timor-Leste, and we urge the various partners to give it greater support in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

Lastly, given the fragility of the institutions, my delegation is convinced of the urgent need to build capacity, to develop human resources and to pursue appropriate policies in order to strengthen the foundation for sustainable development in Timor-Leste.

Mrs. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me first thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his presentation of the report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Let me also express my Government's appreciation to Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma and his entire team for their work at the head of UNMISET.

Mexico welcomes the progress made by UNMISET in the implementation of the mandate established by resolution 1410 (2002). The work undertaken by the United Nations and the international community in Timor-Leste constitutes a foundation on which future missions can be developed, taking into account the particularities of each individual case.

On 27 September 2002, we welcomed Timor-Leste into the United Nations community as the 191st Member State. In a brief time, the Timor-Leste authorities have made considerable progress in consolidating their State, which is founded on a broad-based, participatory democracy. In this process, the establishment and consolidation of relations of

friendship and good-neighbourliness have been of prime importance.

It is encouraging to note that, thanks to cooperation with the Indonesian authorities, many of the problems along the border are being dealt with. In particular, I wish to express my Government's satisfaction at the agreements reached in the Joint Ministerial Commission with Indonesia for the prompt delimitation of the border. States have a right to live within secure and internationally recognized borders. We appeal to the States concerned to accelerate the process of the delimitation of the land and maritime borders.

As the Secretary-General rightly states in his report, resolving the problem of refugees remains a requirement for stability. The fact that this coming December Timorese refugees might lose their refugee status and be left in a state of vulnerability due to the lack of protection under the Statute is a source of concern to my Government. It is therefore urgent to continue to promote the assistance programmes being conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the repatriation of Timorese refugees, as well as the efforts to promote and to protect human rights. In that regard, we welcome the announcement made on 1 November that the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration will join efforts to complete the return of refugees by the end of the year.

Another welcome development is the progress made in the area of internal security, in particular in the training of, and gradual transfer of responsibility to, the Timor-Leste Police Service. A stable security situation will make it possible by the end of this month, as scheduled, to complete the first phase of the four-stage programme to reduce the presence of UNMISET.

I wish to express Mexico's support for the work being accomplished by the Serious Crimes Unit, as well as the work of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation. I also wish to express Mexico's appreciation of and support for the Timor-Leste Government's joint signing with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of a communiqué establishing 11 goals in the area of human rights. The strengthening of a culture of human rights will contribute to the stability of the country.

We should therefore take into consideration the Secretary-General's statement that future progress will depend on maintaining stability in Timor-Leste and on the successful development of a national defence force and the Police Service, including the border service. The support of the international community is essential to those objectives. In this effort, it is crucial to support adequately the strengthening of the judicial system.

It is a source of concern that the Timorese Administration is encountering difficulties in dealing with problems such as the reintegration of ex-combatants, the training and recruiting of civil servants, the indictment of those responsible for serious crimes committed in 1999 and the training of the Border Patrol Service. For that reason, we join the appeal to the international community that it continue to give its assistance in order to ensure the internal stability of the country.

The National Development Plan places appropriate emphasis on the link that exists between the rehabilitation of infrastructure and national development. Mexico supports initiatives that are being undertaken to help the Government of Timor-Leste in its efforts to achieve its objectives and to facilitate the smooth transition of the United Nations role to traditional development assistance. In particular, we support those programmes aimed at poverty reduction, the promotion of good governance, the administration of expenditures, policy management and the development of the private sector and of the energy sector.

The support of the international community, in particular the United Nations, has been fundamental to the success of UNMISET. For that reason, we support the appeal of the Secretary-General that this commitment be maintained so that the goals set can be met.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I would also like to join in welcoming Special Representative Kamalesh Sharma and thank him for his presentation. We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the substantial progress that has been reported in Timor-Leste. It is clear that the Government, under President Xanana Gusmão, has taken office and is working hard to promote its goal of a broad-based democracy. We welcome in particular its willingness to seek dialogue with interest groups that

have political views different from those of the Government. It is a position that shows maturity and true commitment to the principle of pluralism.

Norway also welcomes the progress made in the bilateral relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. The participation of the President of Indonesia in the independence celebrations in Timor-Leste and the subsequent visit of President Gusmão to Jakarta on 2 July 2002 showed their common commitment towards establishing strong bilateral bonds. The decision by the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation to maintain the Joint Border Committee equally signalled the wish to address issues of mutual concern.

As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, a durable solution to the refugee problem remains a prerequisite to ensure long-term stability in Timor-Leste. More than 35,000 refugees still remain in West Timor. It is indicated that this group will lose its refugee status by the end of the year, when the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees closes down its operations in the area. We therefore hope that President Gusmão's recent appeals to the refugees will encourage increased return to Timor-Leste.

We have taken due note of the concerns voiced by the High Commissioner for Human Rights with regard to the verdicts delivered in August by the Indonesian ad hoc tribunal, and we urge Indonesia to address those issues carefully. In this context, we welcome, however, the continued assistance offered by UNMISET to the witnesses travelling to Jakarta — an undertaking deemed to be crucial to progress in the process aimed at bringing to justice those responsible for serious crimes in 1999.

The Special Representative notes that insufficient technical and substantive capacity poses significant challenges within the public administration in Timor-Leste. This also relates to the justice system. The fact that the lack of resources results in detentions without legal basis is a matter of concern. Norway therefore supports and encourages the Government's continued efforts towards the establishment of a well-functioning court system based fully on the principle of the rule of law.

Allow me to end by expressing our satisfaction with the fact that UNMISET is progressing according to the schedule set out by this Council. Moreover, I would like to fully endorse the Secretary-General's highlighting of the need to complement UNMISET's implementation plan with sufficient bilateral assistance in a number of key areas crucial to the ongoing nation-building. In this regard, Timor-Leste can continue to count on the full support of the Norwegian Government.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): I, too, would like to join our colleagues in welcoming an old friend, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, back here. One of his great assets is that he enjoys great confidence in the United Nations community here. I am sure that this confidence will prove to be an asset to him in the field. I also have one small suggestion to make to him. I am sure he is thinking a bit about writing his memoirs after he leaves Timor-Leste and I have found a title for him. The title should read "From New Delhi to New Dili".

Let me begin, first of all, by endorsing a point that I believe Ambassador Williamson made in his statement when he said that the United Nations success in Timor-Leste provides a textbook example of a success story in exit management that we could use in other areas where the United Nations is working. I think that is an important point because, frankly, if we look at the record of the United Nations in terms of its exit strategies, some of its past peacekeeping operations have been less than glorious. We hope that, this time around, the United Nations will get it right. The likelihood is that, of course, the United Nations will get it right partly for the reasons that Ambassador Sharma spelled out at the beginning of his statement, when he spelled out the various strengths of Timor-Leste as a new country. I think, too, if I remember correctly, Ambassador Williamson also spelled out a list of strengths that Timor-Leste enjoys. I think we should build on the strengths that Timor-Leste has.

If I had to add one more point to that list of strengths — and I hope my new colleague from Timor-Leste will not mind if I make this point — it is that Timor-Leste is a relatively newly independent State that can actually learn from the mistakes of all of us who became independent 10 or 20 years ago. I think Timor-Leste can benefit from seeing what mistakes have been made by others.

There seems to be a sort of consensus so far in the discussions that, if we are to continue to maintain this success story, we must have a clear and balanced understanding of the achievements made so far and the

challenges that remain for Timor-Leste. It is clear that much has been achieved, but it is also clear that we still have a lot to do before the mandate is accomplished and before Timor-Leste can stand completely on its own. Even then, there will have to be continued United Nations development assistance for many more years to come.

Clearly, the United Nations and Timor-Leste are at a very important stage of their relationship, a phase in which the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) is devolving more and more operational responsibilities to the Timor-Leste authorities. This has to be done very cautiously and gradually. It cannot be done so slowly that the Timor-Leste Government does not have the opportunity to take up the reins in the areas in which it is able to do so, but at the same time it cannot be too quick, without due regard for the actual situation on the ground. As we have said repeatedly, a hasty downsizing and withdrawal of UNMISET will unravel all the achievements that have been made by the United Nations in Timor-Leste. Therefore, a very fine balance has to be struck in this devolution.

In some ways, Ambassador Sharma's job is probably more difficult than that of his predecessor, because his predecessor functioned more or less like a chief executive officer, making all the decisions. I think Ambassador Sharma, if I may describe his job, serves more like a facilitator trying gradually to allow the emergence of a strong, newly independent State. Ironically, the best test for success for Ambassador Sharma is to make himself completely redundant in Timor-Leste by 2004.

Having said that, it is also clear to me, listening to everybody, that there are many important challenges that remain. They have been spelled out by virtually everyone that has spoken here, and we just want to mention three or four.

My first point is that, while Timor-Leste is consolidating its foundations, its emerging institutions remain fragile and its leaders will have to continue to deal with the dissatisfaction and protests of diverse interest groups, former combatants and veterans.

Secondly, while Timor-Leste and Indonesia have taken concrete steps to enhance bilateral cooperation, including on border issues, we note the phrase in the report that says that "earlier assumptions about progress towards demarcation have proven optimistic" (*S/2002/1223, para. 48*).

Thirdly, despite the efforts of the UNMISET Civilian Support Group, insufficient technical and substantive capacity within the Timor-Leste public administration continues to pose significant challenges to stability. I believe Ambassador Greenstock raised some questions about the filling of the development posts that have been created. One important point that was also made is that it is important to ensure that the international experts, as someone said, are not seen to be doing their job. They must be seen to be preparing the people of Timor-Leste for the job.

My fourth point — and again, this has been touched upon by several speakers — is that the development of the judicial system suffers from a lack of clarity regarding the separation of powers among the judiciary, legislature and executive. Of course, there is also a lack of crucial resources. The seriously limited national capacity may affect serious crimes investigations and proceedings, with possible implications for the reconciliation process.

These are just a few of the challenges. Taking all this into account, it is clear that, as we move forward from here, there must be a clear understanding that the process of the devolution of UNMISET cannot move on the basis of an autopilot. It has to make constant judgements on the stage of progress we are making at each point in time. Here again, if my memory serves me correctly, I believe that Ambassador Williamson also indicated in his statement that we should constantly judge and see whether we are making progress along the lines in which we are expected to do so, and bear this in mind.

This brings me to a point that we raised at the private meeting of the Security Council on Timor-Leste. That is whether we can come up with more specific benchmarks for Timor-Leste's progress similar to those which Special Representative of the Secretary-General Michael Steiner has worked out for Kosovo. It is possible that we were not clear at that meeting, so maybe we should elaborate on what we meant by this. We recognized that milestones for UNMISET were included in the Secretary-General's report of 17 April 2002 (*S/2002/432*), which recommended the establishment of the peacekeeping mission.

We would like to suggest that UNMISET produce a document similar to that produced by United Nations Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), which breaks down the milestones into detailed goals and benchmarks. In fact, UNMIK has moved on to develop a set of progress indicators, to systematically track what has been achieved and to identify areas where greater efforts need to be made. We found this document very helpful in assessing progress in Kosovo. We wonder whether the same could be done for UNMISET and for Timor-Leste. We would appreciate Ambassador Sharma's comments.

Someone once commented to me that the meetings on Timor-Leste had become very boring. I think that this is a good sign. It shows that we are basically on the right track on Timor-Leste. Paradoxically, the best ways to ensure that we keep the meetings on Timor-Leste boring in the months to come is to ensure that the international community remains engaged in this process.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): May I first express appreciation to Special Representative Sharma for his briefing on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and, as other colleagues have already done this morning, to thank Ambassador Sharma and the men and women of UNMISET for their work, which is being carried out in the highest traditions of the United Nations.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, Ambassador Guterres, for the first time since his country joined the United Nations on 27 September. Membership of the United Nations is a recognition of nationhood and of having a place among the peoples of the world — a moment of arrival, as for any new Member State, for the people of Timor-Leste.

Ireland associates itself fully with the statement that will be delivered shortly by the representative of Denmark, on behalf of the European Union.

The report of the Secretary-General highlights that remarkable progress has been made in a number of important areas and that the benchmarks set out in the plan for UNMISET are being met. The work of nation-building is proceeding well. At the same time, the report also highlights the considerable challenges facing the new State and rightly points out that the continued engagement of the international community is essential to ensure that Timor-Leste has the chance it deserves to seize the opportunity history has given it.

The Government and the people of Timor-Leste are to be congratulated for the way in which they have set about building their future. The Government's National Development Plan, in our view, reflects a balanced course for the country's medium-term economic and social needs. Ireland admires the judgement of the authorities in Timor-Leste for giving priority to the protection of human rights. The rejection of the death penalty is an admirable example of the direction in which the country intends to go. Timor-Leste is meeting, as Ambassador Sharma said, the highest standards expected of a democratic State.

We applaud the manner in which President Gusmão and his Government are approaching foreign policy, particularly Timor-Leste's crucial relationship with Indonesia. Ireland welcomes the establishment by the two countries of the Joint Ministerial Commission and the fact that they are jointly addressing issues such as border demarcation and access to Timor-Leste from Oecussi. The test of the Commission and, more broadly, of the resolve of the two countries will be in the implementation of equitable solutions to these issues. Additionally, a just outcome for those who committed serious crimes in 1999 will be important for the positive development of relations between the two countries. Such an outcome would also be good for both societies.

It is right to focus on the many positive developments of the sort I have mentioned, but it is right for the Council not to ignore the very real challenges remaining in Timor-Leste in addressing which the Council can still play a role, through UNMISET.

Timor-Leste is unquestionably a very poor country. The fact that only 23 per cent of its modest budgeted revenue is locally generated puts into stark focus the challenge Timor-Leste faces in creating a sustainable economic environment. As many have remarked this morning, it is clear the donor community will have an essential role to play well after the current phase of immediate post-independence engagement.

It is no particular surprise that the justice sector is struggling. We cannot expect a country with a long colonial history, which suffered much violence before independence, to produce overnight a functioning justice sector. The justice sector is a highly important

face of authority, however, and has a particularly critical role to play in maintaining the confidence of the people in their institutions. In view of the ongoing difficulties, Ireland would encourage the widest possible cooperation between the Government and the international community to address the most urgent needs. A situation in which a majority of the prison population is being held for long periods without trial because the court system does not function properly needs to be addressed with the utmost urgency.

The significant progress in training and developing the Police Service is encouraging. So too is the news that an UNMISET-led mission is to assess the longer-term policing needs. This is the sort of work the Security Council should promote. The Secretary-General's report also confirms that UNMISET is on target with the development of Timor-Leste's defence forces, although it stresses that continued donor and bilateral support will be necessary for this progress to continue.

It is natural that UNMISET has concentrated on the central institutions of government, as mandated in resolution 1410 (2002). We all agree on the need to strengthen the capacity of the central Government, something essential to the functioning of the new State. At the same time, however, we should not overlook the fact that 80 per cent of the population is rural-based. This has implications for local institution-building and, by extension, for the consolidation of the legitimacy of authority. Those involved in the sub-national governing structure should receive support and guidance on operational matters. In this respect Ireland's development cooperation programme, Ireland Aid, has undertaken to help the Government develop terms of reference for a study on decentralization options.

Ireland is closely involved in a range of development cooperation programmes in Timor-Leste. We have been so since 1999, and last year we opened a representative office in Dili. Our experience there has shown us that bilateral aid is crucial to the future development of Timor-Leste. That country had already been identified by Ireland's Development Aid programme as a priority for reconstruction and rehabilitation activity. The work we are doing strongly supports and complements the priorities set by the Security Council in resolution 1410 (2002) and the work of UNMISET.

The way in which the Council has handled the situation in Timor-Leste since the tragic and chaotic days of August 1999 has demonstrated that the United Nations, in this as in other areas, is fully capable of successfully handling very complex tasks. For more than three years, the Council and the international community have been adroit and generous in their handling of the situation. During that period, the situation in Timor-Leste has greatly improved. The United Nations mission there has evolved from peacekeeping to peace-building.

The current mission shows that peace-building is very much part of the Council's work, and not merely something to be contracted out to other parts of the United Nations system. Only a few years ago, it was very difficult to convince the United Nations membership that the Council should be engaging in peace-building work. Now, that debate appears to have been put to rest, to the benefit of Timor-Leste and the United Nations. It is now appropriate that in the period ahead the Council should maintain its vigorous involvement with Timor-Leste. Ireland strongly urges that it do just that.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to welcome Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma and express our gratitude to him for his presentation of the report (S/2002/1223) on the activities of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Through him, I also wish to congratulate the members of his team; the very important start of their activities and the success they are having will guarantee a very promising outcome for the Mission.

It has been five months since the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste declared its independence and less than two months since it was admitted as a full Member of our Organization. The new Government has been steadily consolidating itself, and has been promoting participative democracy, in keeping with the expectations of the international community.

The dissatisfaction of certain sectors of the population, as noted in the report, highlights the difficulties and challenges the Government faces in achieving the development and well-being of the population. We welcome the Government's efforts to establish good relations with the other States of the region and its participation in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as an observer.

I would like to make a few comments on the objectives set by the Security Council in resolution 1410 (2002). Regarding the programme on stability, democracy and justice, we underscore the work being done by the Civilian Support Group in addressing gaps within the administration in key areas, including finance, the legal system and the management of administrative and governmental affairs. As already mentioned in this Chamber, the insufficient technical and substantive capacity of the public administration is a serious obstacle to stability.

The justice system remains perhaps the weakest link in the new State. The Secretary-General's report points out the need to strengthen the various components of that system. It is clear that an effective system for the administration of justice is not something that can be achieved in a short time. It is necessary to continue and to redouble efforts, since the proper functioning of the justice system impacts on the stability and the development of the State.

The need to bring to trial those responsible for the grave crimes committed in 1999 has been raised on several occasions in the Security Council. We appreciate information on action that has been taken thus far by the Special Panels for Serious Crimes and the envisaged date of completion, 31 December 2002, although the Panels will continue to assist prosecutors even after that date.

We are concerned about the assertion in paragraph 22 of the report regarding the emergence of additional cases of serious crimes different from those provided for in the implementation plan. These might involve crimes against humanity and might go uninvestigated. The fact that the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation has begun its activities is also positive. My delegation has already underscored the importance of the work that needs to be done by that body, since, as is well known, there can be no reconciliation without justice.

Regarding the internal security and law enforcement programme, while we note that the security situation is normal and the fact that the UNMISET civilian police have already transferred control of four of the 13 districts to the Timor-Leste Police Service, it would be important here to echo the appeal made by Ambassador Sharma at the end of his statement regarding terrorism. It seems that the region has been selected for terrorist action, at least according to a large number of reports and much information. Therefore, this is a warning that I would like to echo, because it is clearly reflected in the report.

We have also taken note of the fact that the UNMISET police component has been reduced by one third, in keeping with the plan, and that training is proceeding satisfactorily. Nonetheless, we also attach importance to the joint assessment mission soon to take place, in which the Government, the United Nations and donor countries will participate, to assess the level of training and logistical support needed and to identify resource difficulties.

Regarding the programme on external security and border control, although the report indicates that external security and border control have continued to improve — in particular, control of militia activities and criminal activities at the border — the risk of terrorism, to which we have already referred, is also a concern. We associate ourselves with all those who have expressed their solidarity with the families of the two officers of the peacekeeping component who were killed in the Bali attack.

The return of refugees from West Timor, which continued following independence and which reached its highest level in June and July, has declined. It may be that this could be dealt with in the short term, as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has indicated.

The security situation is also very encouraging. As scheduled, by the end of November, the first phase of the programme for downsizing the military component of UNMISET will be complete. Future progress will depend on maintaining security in Timor-Leste and on the successful development, through sufficient donor and bilateral support, of the national defence force and the Border Patrol Service.

Let me say in conclusion that capacity-building and empowering the local population in all areas — security, economy, justice and governance — continues to be the main work to be done. We are pleased that, to date, the situation is evolving within the envisaged parameters, including the plan to downsize UNMISET.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

At the outset, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2002/1223) and Ambassador Sharma for his detailed briefing. I would also like to extend a welcome to Ambassador Guterres as the first Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations. His presence has made today's meeting more meaningful.

Since the independence of Timor-Leste, encouraging changes have been taking place, one after another. Under the leadership of the new Government, and with the enormous support of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), the people of Timor-Leste are carrying out nation-building on all fronts in a gradual and orderly manner. It is also pointed out in the report that leaders of Timor-Leste are vigorously pursuing broadly based democratic participation on the domestic front. On the diplomatic front, they are actively building and developing friendly relations and cooperation with the international community, particularly with the countries of the region. China is pleased to note that both Timor-Leste and Indonesia are committed to good-neighbourliness. That is bound to contribute positively to the long-term stability of Timor-Leste and of the region as a whole.

Under the leadership of Mr. Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMISET is comprehensively carrying out the mandate given to it by resolution 1410 (2002). In so doing, it has established good working relations with the Government of Timor-Leste and the various sectors of the country. We note that the Mission has done much to help Timor-Leste to improve its administrative capacity and to put in place a judicial system. It has also made progress in the areas of police training, the transfer of policing responsibilities and cooperation with the national defence force of Timor-Leste. In addition, the Mission's military component has maintained an effective presence in the border areas and has established a mechanism for consultation and cooperation with the Government of Indonesia; this has played a key role in improving the security environment in Timor-Leste.

China appreciates the Mission's achievements and will continue to support its work. We look forward to an even greater role for the Mission under the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Sharma.

Of course, there are still many difficulties to be overcome in the work of the new Government and of the Mission. As the report of the Secretary-General repeatedly points out, the support of the international community is of crucial importance to the various aspects of capacity-building in Timor-Leste and to the transition from United Nations functions to traditional development assistance. It is therefore necessary that the international community increase its input in Timor-Leste and fully implement its commitments. In addition, an adequate solution to the issue of refugees will have an impact on the long-term stability and security of Timor-Leste. We hope that the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia will continue to work to make progress in that regard.

China long supported Timor-Leste in its quest for independence. We will continue to support the people of Timor-Lest in their efforts at building a nation. Within our capabilities, we will also continue to provide support.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

It is my pleasure to welcome the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luis Guterres, who is taking the floor for the first time in this Chamber as the representative of a Member of the United Nations. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste): It is both an honour and a privilege for me to address this body for the first time as the first representative of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste to the United Nations. Allow me, therefore, to take this opportunity to convey my Government's deep appreciation for the unwavering support of the Council, and of the United Nations in general, throughout the years of Timor-Leste's struggle for freedom and self-determination. I would also like to assure the Council of my country's full support in its deliberations on the other important issues before it.

My delegation sincerely congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency. We have no doubt that your experience and dedication will guide the Council in its deliberations in times when difficult decisions are required.

My Government would also like to commend the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and balanced report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) before the Council today. The

report (S/2002/1223) reflects the hard work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, and his staff. His advice and leadership during the past six months underscore the continued commitment of the United Nations to Timor-Leste.

The report indicates that much still needs to be done. We fully agree with that conclusion. The Government and the people of Timor-Leste stand ready to face the many challenges ahead of us. In doing so, we are committed to the principles promoted by the United Nations: democracy, transparency and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

At the same time, however, I must ask for the Council's understanding. Timor-Leste is still a young country; its transition from decades of violence and deprivation to being a fully functioning member of the community of free States is not yet completed. The difficult task of building human and institutional capacities and an infrastructure needs time. Building a self-sufficient and prosperous nation will require the Council's continued support and partnership, as well as that of the international community at large.

In its first National Development Plan, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has identified the key challenges that will confront the country in the years to come. Poverty reduction, education, health care, infrastructure and economic development and institutional capacity-building at all levels of Government remain top priorities. Therefore, funding the posts called for by the Secretary-General to support Timor-Leste's efforts in the areas of development and poverty reduction is critical to the viability and long-term political stability of Timor-Leste. We need personnel that have the expertise and capacity to accomplish the goals set forth in the National Development Plan. That will help not only to foster the investments and progress already made in the country's economic and social recovery, but also to achieving the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration.

UNMISET's mandate also calls for assistance in law enforcement and the justice sector. The development of an effective, independent and impartial legal system is an area of great concern to the Government of Timor-Leste. It is central to the security and stability of our nation, reconciliation among our people and the creation of an investor-friendly economic environment. We understand that our civil servants and lawyers still have things to learn. Training and capacity-building therefore remain key priorities. Creating a justice system from scratch cannot be done over night. It requires the sustained effort and commitment of all of us — Government, civil society and the international community.

While reconstruction challenges remain paramount, I would like to highlight some of the positive political developments within Timor-Leste and outside it. Democratic culture and political participation are growing. The first laws have been passed, and the Parliament has become the proud sovereign of our young nation. The reconciliation and return of refugees has continued. Just recently, President Gusmão visited West Timor with a delegation of 100 citizens from Timor-Leste to encourage the return and resettlement of the remaining refugees. Reconciliation and healing between the Timorese will also further improve relations with Indonesia.

Strengthening relations with Indonesia is a priority of my Government. As mentioned in the report, President Xanana Gusmão's first State visit took him to Jakarta, where President Megawati Soekarnoputri warmly received him. In addition, a high-level meeting was recently held, which resulted in the creation of the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation between the two countries. In addressing issues of mutual concern, the Commission will further strengthen friendly and neighbourly relations.

The negotiations with Australia on petroleum exploitation in the Timor Sea are well on track.

On the international level, Timor-Leste has become a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and a member of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), and we support the Indonesian initiative to establish the South-West Pacific Forum, comprised of Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Timor-Leste. We have been invited to participate as an observer in meetings of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and of the Pacific Island Forum. Timor-Leste has established diplomatic relations with several countries and has started to open its first diplomatic missions. We have ratified the Rome Statute for an International Criminal Court, and we have accelerated preparations

for ratification of several international human rights instruments by 10 December 2002.

Of course, Timor-Leste is fully committed to the global fight against terrorism. Cowardly attacks against innocent civilians are morally repugnant, and we intend to fully cooperate with the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). However, since Timor-Leste's law enforcement and security apparatus, including its defence and police force, is still in its nascent stage, we need the continued presence of the international police and peacekeeping force until we have the capacity to meet these and other goals on our own. Downsizing now would be premature and would jeopardize the achievements of recent years. I would urge Council members to adhere to the targets established by the Council in May 2002.

In this context, I would like to convey my Government's heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the families of the victims of the senseless terror attack in Bali. Among the lives lost were those of United Nations staff members serving in my country. We share your loss. Just yesterday, President Xanana Gusmão laid a wreath at the site of the tragedy.

Let me conclude by expressing, once again, my Government's deep appreciation for the continued support of the United Nations and the Secretary-General. Timor-Leste is on a good path. Although progress has been made, much work remains to be done.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Timor-Leste for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Fiji. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Naidu (Fiji): It is a pleasure for us to have Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma amidst us, and we thank him most sincerely for the very comprehensive report he has presented to the Council.

In all previous meetings of the Security Council on East Timor, we had leaders from Dili, but it is now a great pleasure for us to see post-independence Timor-Leste represented by the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Guterres in the Council today.

Mr. President, I requested the floor to contribute to this debate on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) members in New York: Australia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji, as well as Kiribati and Palau. The subject of Timor-Leste is close to our members owing to its affinity and proximity to our region. We are aware of the fact that the future sustainability and stability of Timor-Leste has a significant bearing on our own subregional and wider regional good-neighbourly relations, security and stability. It is at least for those reasons that several PIF members have taken active roles in both the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

The Pacific Islands Forum group wishes to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for a candid account of the UNMISET targets that have been met, some beyond projections, but some goals are still outstanding. We are pleased to see the Mission adhering closely to the agreed downsizing phases and timetable, neither faster nor slower, and we are very hopeful that goodwill from all parties will ensure a final withdrawal under phase 4 in June 2004.

We welcome the positive developments that have taken place since the independence of, and transition of governance to, Timor-Leste.

The fragility of the country's nascent institutions in the sectors of justice, internal security and law enforcement, external security and border control and development constitutes an uphill challenge. As can be expected, its first Human Development Report shows poor indicators on poverty, literacy and life expectancy, and it confirms Timor-Leste as the poorest nation in Asia in terms of financial and human development. The Secretary-General's report also serves as an opportunity for Timor-Leste to chart its own course of development away from poverty, and our Group endorses the Secretary-General's recommendations for continued engagement towards this goal.

For its part, the activities of the Timor-Leste Government in making laws and in building national institutions and international networks are significant achievements. They are also evidence of its growing integrity and deep commitment to working with the

United Nations Support Mission. In addition to Timor-Leste's participation in meetings of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the third Summit of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), we also note Timor-Leste's special observer status, with equivalent rights of an observer, in the 33rd Pacific Islands Forum, held also in Fiji this year, as reported in United Nations document A/57/331. We urge United Nations entities system-wide, Bretton Woods institutions, civil society and organizations to build on that Government's bilateral and multilateral efforts to promote sustainable development.

We now want to highlight two areas in the Secretary-General's report that require continued international assistance. We recognize that development of the public administration is significant for good governance. In this respect, we welcome the recruitment of stability and development advisors to act as mentors in the transfer of skills to the Government. We encourage UNMISET to maintain its focus on the development of a self-reliant civil service.

Secondly, positive efforts in building on human rights institutions in Timor-Leste are generating international confidence in the Government's work. We note progress made in the work of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, and in the parallel innovative concept of a community reconciliation process. The more stable security situation, the growing number of indictments issued by the Serious Crimes Unit, the non-violence training in police units and the awareness programmes on gender and HIV/AIDS are timely responses to the multiple vulnerabilities facing Timor-Leste. Despite some progress in meeting agreed targets, much remains to be achieved in the justice and police systems.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Chile. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to express to you, Sir, our congratulations on your wise leadership of the Security Council during this difficult period. The Chilean delegation also wishes to thank you for the convening of this open debate, an opportunity that enables us to express our own views on an important process to which we feel connected in a special way. In addition, I wish to express our appreciation for the valuable information given to us today by Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, whom we sincerely congratulate on his constant efforts aimed at the development of that new nation.

Since 1961, Chile has been part of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples - a body in which we have worked hard to promote, inter alia, the principle of self-determination of the non-self-governing Territories included on the agenda of the United Nations. For that reason, we fully realize the importance of the significance for the inhabitants of Timor-Leste of having won the right to embark on the path of a viable and independent nation as of 20 May 2002.

For Chile, it is a source of particular pride to have participated in the previous period, as a member of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), in a United Nations effort to contribute to the process of that country's independence and reconstruction. For that reason, my Government takes special interest in and is following closely the first steps of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as an independent nation. We should like to emphasize, in that regard, the efforts of the Government headed by President Xanana Gusmão, and we welcome Timor-Leste's admission to the United Nations on 27 September.

As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his most recent report (S/2002/1223), my country agrees that, although the authorities and the people of Timor-Leste have continued to work to strengthen the foundations of their country during the first five months of its independence, its new institutions will remain fragile in the immediate future. In that regard, we value the commitments of the international community, especially the work being carried out by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), and the cooperation of donor countries. We note with interest the work being carried out in the areas of stability, democracy and justice, particularly progress achieved with regard to finances, the judicial system and the management of administrative and governmental resources. However, we recognize that there are many problems that must be resolved, and we believe that priority should be given to overcoming the

many difficulties that persist in the judicial sector and in the prison system.

We also attach great importance to the establishment of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the work that it has begun in the country's 13 districts. That is a very significant contribution with regard to human rights and an inescapable necessity for any democratic transition. Chile can attest to the fact that reconciliation is not stable and does not lead to effective peace unless it is accompanied by truth and justice with respect to human rights.

We observe with great interest the work undertaken in the area of external security and border control, and we value the progress achieved. Nevertheless, we share concern at the risk of terrorism faced by the region, especially after the attack in Bali, Indonesia. In that regard, we consider it highly important that necessary measures continue to be implemented to guarantee the security of the people of Timor-Leste and of United Nations personnel.

We also consider it necessary to continue to work for the return of refugees, as that is a prerequisite for stability. We emphasize the work accomplished in that regard by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and by President Gusmão himself. We value the efforts and the rapprochement observed between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Timor-Leste, which facilitates fulfilment of the commitments undertaken and which may help in meeting the timetable envisaged for UNMISET's reduction and ultimate withdrawal.

However, we know that there are still great challenges to be met and that the road ahead is not free of difficulties. Therefore, it is imperative that sufficient bilateral assistance continue to be provided in various fundamental sectors mentioned in the report. In that connection, it is extremely important that the donor community maintains the firm commitment of support that it has undertaken on behalf of Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Chile for the kind words that he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): At the outset, I should like to thank Ambassador Sharma for his introductory comments on the report (S/2002/1223) and also to compliment Ambassador Guterres on his first statement before the Council.

The Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) is comprehensive and forward-looking. It usefully covers the challenges of nation-building, including the formidable task of developing a sustainable economy. I should like to associate New Zealand with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, and I should like to make a few additional comments from a purely New Zealand perspective.

Such stock-taking is timely and of special interest to New Zealand, particularly given this week's withdrawal of the New Zealand battalion and aviation detachment, in line with the Council's schedule for downsizing the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. The New Zealand Defence Force battalion and aviation detachment have been part of the United Nations peacekeeping force since 1999. New Zealand's experience of working in a coalition battalion group during the past three years has been overwhelmingly positive, and it has been enriching and rewarding for our military personnel. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the countries that have served alongside us for their cooperation and support. These include Fiji and Nepal, and two members of the Council, Ireland and Singapore.

Although New Zealand's military presence in Timor-Leste will greatly reduce this month, our involvement in Timor-Leste will certainly continue. New Zealand is committed to contributing further to Timor-Leste's nation-building, and to maintaining a secure and stable environment in which this can take place.

Up to 26 New Zealand Defence Force personnel will remain in the country as United Nations Military Observers, headquarters staff officers and bilateral training support to the Timor-Leste defence force. We will also continue to provide targeted development assistance, focussed primarily on community and natural resource development, basic education and governance and institution capacity-building.

I would like briefly to comment on a few areas of the Secretary General's report. Revenue should begin to flow from the country's petroleum and gas reserves in the Timor Sea in the next 2 to 4 years, following the ratification and implementation of the Timor Sea Treaty. We welcome Timor-Leste's efforts at promoting sound and transparent development planning and budgeting, and believe that this will serve the country well when the revenues become available for use.

Timor-Leste's future prosperity will depend much on the strength of its bilateral and regional relations. The bilateral relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia will be especially important and indeed Ambassador Guterres has highlighted this in his statement before the Council this morning. In this respect, we welcome the many positive developments that have occurred in this regard, particularly the formation of the Joint Commission for Bilateral Co-operation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. At its first meeting last month, the Commission announced initiatives to resolve residual issues like the demarcation of a common land border. Having had troops deployed in a border area, New Zealand fully appreciates the importance of agreement on demarcation of the land border between Timor-Leste and West Timor for maintaining a sound security environment in the region as a whole.

It is also encouraging that other regional countries have increased their engagement with Timor-Leste in various areas. This augurs well for Timor-Leste's integration within the region.

New Zealand shares other donors' concerns about the current weaknesses of the justice sector in Timor-Leste, which lacks both physical and human resources. We have seen reports, for example, that people are being held for long periods in prison on remand, and in some cases without adequate warrant. We endorse the Secretary-General's recommendation that international donors should focus on this sector.

With regard to the corrections system, New Zealand has supported the establishment of the Timor-Leste Prison Service since early 2000. We will continue working with the Government, the United Nations and other donors to further strengthen and develop the capacity in corrections management, consistent with international best practice.

We note the Secretary-General's recommendations that the Timor-Leste Police Force needs more resources in order to carry out its mandate effectively, particularly in the outer districts. The rule of law is of utmost importance and, indeed, Ambassador Sharma highlighted that in his statement to the Council this morning. Clearly, people need to have faith in the ability of the police force and the justice system as a whole to provide a safe and protective environment and, again, the international community needs to assist in this respect as well.

Timor-Leste's security will also be underpinned by further progress in addressing the legacy of the violence committed in 1999. This includes the truth-telling process being carried out by the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, as well as the effective prosecution of major human rights crimes by the Serious Crimes Panel in the Dili District Court. We fully support United Nations assistance to the Serious Crimes Unit. Equally important are the ad hoc tribunals currently under way in Jakarta. New Zealand was extremely disappointed at the first verdicts in those trials and has a number of concerns about that process, which to be credible, must be robust.

We agree with the report's assessment that progress has been steady, but that international support remains vital to strengthen the still fragile institutions of Timor-Leste. New Zealand remains committed to playing its part in this effort.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the Associated Countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

It is a pleasure to be able to start my intervention by thanking our former colleague Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, for his statement regarding the situation in Timor-Leste. Allow me also to commend you, in your capacity as President of the Security Council, for convening this open meeting on the United Nations Mission in East Timor's (UNMISET). The European Union welcomes this opportunity to

congratulate the people and the elected representatives of Timor-Leste on the birth of their new nation, as well as Timor-Leste's admission to the United Nations.

In its efforts to build a nation, the people of Timor-Leste have shown great political maturity, choosing to support democracy and to establish sound and friendly relations with their neighbours as the only viable path to peace and progress.

The European Union welcomes and supports the efforts of the new Government, under President Xanana Gusmão, to consolidate the fragile political institutions in Timor-Leste. Furthermore, the European Union supports the efforts to ensure and uphold democratic institutions and the rule of law while building the new nation. We support the Government's commitment to respect human rights, including its firm rejection of the death penalty.

We welcome the positive development in the neighbourly relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. The first decisions on border delineation have recently been taken. We hope the cooperation in this field will continue in the same friendly spirit and we believe that the present steps bode well for future cooperation between the two countries on a number of crucial issues. Cooperation is highly called for on bringing those responsible for serious crimes committed in 1999 to justice. Refugee issues are another area of importance. The European Union supports the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste to welcome back the refugees still remaining in West Timor.

In spite of the achievements of the past three years and in spite of continued progress, there are still major tasks to be accomplished in the coming months and years. As one of the poorest nations in South-East Asia, Timor-Leste faces a number of challenges. There is a critical need for the continued support of the international community.

The United Nations continues to have an important role to play in the nation-building efforts of Timor-Leste. We note with satisfaction that UNMISET's operations have generally progressed according to schedule. UNMISET should stay in Timor-Leste as long as it is deemed necessary for the fulfilment of its mandate. A strategy has already been set out, including deadlines for downsizing personnel. This strategy must be kept under review in order to make sure that it accurately takes into account developments in relation to both the internal and the external security situation.

The European Union is concerned about the recent atrocious events in Bali, which constitute a worrying indicator of increased international terrorist risks in the region. The European Union commends the ongoing efforts by the Timorese authorities to ensure external security, in parallel with its efforts to maintain internal security, the rule of law and law enforcement. We nevertheless worry about the potential vulnerability of a country still in the process of building its security institutions. In this regard, we underline the importance of continued international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and of the adoption of adequate measures to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism.

Many European Union nationals have participated in the successive United Nations missions in Timor-Leste and will remain present in UNMISET. The European Union has made considerable efforts to support the new nation, and the European Union, as well as its member States, will continue its development cooperation with Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Denmark for her kind words addressed to me.

There are eight speakers remaining on my list, and Mr. Sharma would also like to respond to the questions raised during the debate. However, as time is running out for this morning's meeting, I will give the floor to one more speaker before suspending the meeting.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia): Allow me to express the gratitude of the delegation of Indonesia to you, Mr. President, and to the delegation of China, for convening this open meeting on the Situation in Timor-Leste. We acknowledge the presence in our midst today of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma. We welcome him back to New York; my Government certainly has had the privilege of working closely with him. We thank him for his thoughtful statement to the Council, which he made earlier. My delegation is also grateful to the Secretary-General for his report.

As is well known, Indonesia had, even before Timor-Leste became an independent State last May, developed a warm and special relationship with the one hundred and ninety-first Member of our Organization.

It is in this connection that we are pleased to applaud the progress that Timor-Leste has made since its independence. As we declared in this Chamber last May, the Government of Indonesia has supported UNMISET in the execution of its mandate, and it will continue to do so. It is our firm belief that progress in Timor-Leste will require the cooperation of the members of the international community.

The first meeting, in Jakarta last month, of the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation, set up by Indonesia and Timor-Leste in July 2002 to facilitate consultation and cooperation, marked a further step on the path towards improved bilateral relations between the Governments of Timor-Leste and of Indonesia. The Commission established five working groups to deal with border issues, trade and finance, legal matters, educational and cultural affairs and transport and communications.

With particular reference to the complex border question, both sides agreed to adapt the former Joint Border Committee of Indonesia and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). That body's first meeting was originally scheduled for 18 and 19 November 2002, but, because of Ramadan, it has been rescheduled for 18 and 19 December. The Committee has been charged with finalizing an agreement by 30 June 2003. In this connection, it may be recalled that in April and May 2002, Indonesia and UNTAET undertook a joint reconnaissance survey aimed at working towards the delimitation of the land border between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, including the enclave. Both nations have also arranged to commence formal discussions on maritime border issues by the first half of 2003.

At the regional level, it is also my pleasure to point out that early last month, Indonesia's South-West Pacific Dialogue initiative was realized; Timor-Leste is a founding participant in that process. Its attendance at Association of South-East Asian Nations meetings bodes well for the further integration of Timor-Leste into longer-term relationships with the region. Indonesia is proud of the modest strides made in its relationship with Timor-Leste, symbolized by the creation of the Joint Commission and the holding of the South-West Pacific Dialogue. To us, such meetings are a reflection of the mature cooperation between two sovereign States. I believe such cooperation deserves the wholehearted support of the Council and the international community.

I should like now to touch on the issue of refugees, which has been on the table for some time. Indonesia expects a comprehensive solution by the end of this year. Towards that end, my Government will provide additional incentives for those who opt to return to Timor-Leste by the end of this year. President Xanana Gusmão's visit to East Nusa Tenggara early this month is also part of the redoubled efforts being made by Indonesia and Timor-Leste to encourage the remaining refugees to return.

We take note of the Secretary-General's remarks concerning the low rate of returns in the past two months. One of the major impediments is the lack of the financial support envisaged when the Joint Appeal by Indonesia and the United Nations was launched last November. We therefore reiterate the need for the international community to contribute generously and fulfil its financial commitments to the Joint Appeal. Only through concerted efforts by Indonesia, Timor-Leste and the international community can this problem be solved expeditiously and comprehensively.

In the area of external security and border control, we support the assertion in the report that the overall situation has continued to improve since the previous report of the Secretary-General was issued. Efforts by the Governments of Timor-Leste and of Indonesia in this regard are clearly having the desired effect, and Indonesia is determined to ensure that progress does not stop. To this end, the cooperation and consultation between the Indonesian military in West Timor and their counterparts in UNMISET will be maintained. In order to encourage progress on this vital issue, however, it is our view that in preparing the reports of the Secretary-General, efforts must be made to avoid using terminology or making references that do not reflect the situation in the field. If there are criminal elements in the border area, for instance, they should be characterized as such. Of course, criminal activities are common problems and need common efforts.

While Indonesia pursues these avenues of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in support of the young State, there is tremendous room for the

international community at large to support these efforts. In this connection, we draw attention to the appeal of the Secretary-General to the Security Council and the donor community to remain engaged in Timor-Leste, to build upon their outstanding contribution to date and to fully realize this promise. Not only will such a commitment enable UNMISET to adhere to the timetable that has been set, but it will enable the Government and the people of Timor-Leste to make the kind of steady progress that they badly need. Meanwhile, Indonesia will continue to stand by them and to provide its assistance and encouragement.

Finally, we would like once again to reiterate that the relationship between the two countries has been flourishing extremely well at all levels, and therefore we urge the members of the international community, as well as the United Nations, to support this.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Indonesia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4646th meeting

Thursday, 14 November 2002, 3.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yishan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Gokool
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2002/1223).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-69432 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.40 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): The Secretary-General's report (S/2002/1223) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) gives positive indications that Timor-Leste is, by and large, well on the path towards becoming a democratic and economically viable nation: legislative networks have been taking root, administrative structures are functioning relatively well and the economy is in better shape.

These initial achievements can certainly be attributed to the wisdom and aspirations of the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste, as well as to the commitment of the international community. In that regard, my delegation appreciates the leadership of Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who has shown considerable energy and competence.

Half a year has passed since we celebrated the yearned-for independence of Timor-Leste. My Government attaches great value to the role of UNMISET, the successor mission to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, in pursuing a well devised, milestone-based approach towards the Mission's gradual withdrawal over a two-year period. In that regard, my delegation notes with satisfaction the Secretary-General's observation that UNMISET has been able to adhere generally to the timetables, as that observation exemplifies the success of the Mission during the past six months. As one of the major troop-contributing countries to the military component of UNMISET, the Republic of Korea will continue to fulfil its share of the responsibilities until the Mission's mandate is accomplished.

Noteworthy, too, is Timor-Leste's smooth integration into the community of nations. The world welcomed that nation as the 191st State Member of the United Nations last September. Timor-Leste has joined major international and regional institutions, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and, more importantly, maintains firm diplomatic relations with regional States, as well as with the wider world at large. The Republic of Korea has an ambassadorial representation in Timor-Leste and is committed to promoting stronger relations with that new nation on every front.

The Secretary-General's report aptly reminds us that, even with the steady progress that has materialized thus far, there remain many challenges to be tackled. Unfilled vacancies in the Government sector, insufficient staffing of qualified officials, the weak judicial system and acute resource constraints in many parts of the administration are among those challenges. As has been the case in the past few years, the Republic of Korea will continue to extend, wherever possible, its humanitarian and development assistance to Timor-Leste, including in-kind, financial and training assistance. We believe that the continued commitment of the international community is an indispensable factor in enabling that new nation to develop as a democratic and prosperous nation.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to your delegation, Sir, for convening this important meeting.

As Ukraine's principled position on Timor-Leste has already been stated in the Council on numerous occasions, I shall confine myself to making a few short remarks in connection with today's discussion.

We are happy to ascertain that the Government of Timor-Leste has already taken office and that its national institutions have assumed responsibility for the management of its affairs. The Parliament has adopted its first pieces of legislation on a number of important issues. The country has become a member of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. It has established diplomatic relations with nearly all States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations. On 27 September 2002, Timor-Leste was admitted as the 191st State Member of the United Nations. We believe that all this also reflects the results of the work done by the United Nations, and specifically by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), led by Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma.

Security Council resolution 1410 (2002), which established UNMISET, marked the launching of a new

phase of partnership between the United Nations and Timor-Leste, in which steadfast cooperation and support in many critical areas has brought tangible results.

UNMISET and the United Nations relief agencies have helped the country to achieve steady progress for the past sixth months in restoring essential services and in reaching its development targets. The United Nations relief, rehabilitation and development programmes in Timor-Leste have managed to make progress in rebuilding various components of the country's infrastructure. Significant progress has been made in the rehabilitation of physical and social infrastructure and in the provision of social services, especially in health and education. We believe that continued international support is needed for the strengthening of the capacity of national institutions. We welcome, in this regard, the support being provided to the Government of Timor-Leste by Indonesia, Australia and other countries.

Despite the considerable efforts made over the past six months, a number of critical elements of the State remain fragile. One of the sensitive points of the State-building strategy for Timor-Leste is the administrative and governmental system. Building Timorese public services remains one of the most difficult aspects of UNMISET's mandate. There is still a grave shortage of qualified and experienced Timorese across all areas of government activity, particularly in the justice sector. In this regard, we welcome UNMISET's civilian support programme of advisers aimed at promoting a broad-based, self-sustaining and self-reliant administration of Timor Leste. In our view, international advisers should continue to assist to ensure that capacity-building can be maintained by Timorese nationals and their institutions with minimal external support.

The resolution of the refugee problem remains another crucial issue and a prerequisite to ensuring stability in the country. We welcome the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to help refugees to return to Timor-Leste by the end of this year, hopefully. The complete return of refugees from West Timor should remain a firm priority in order to guarantee security on both sides of the border. We stress the need to preserve the refugee status of the Timorese who, under certain circumstances, may stay in West Timor after December 2002.

The issue of the accountability of those responsible for serious crimes committed in 1999 continues to represent a serious concern for the international community. We urge both Timor-Leste and Indonesia to cooperate closely in bringing to justice all violators of human rights.

As a member of the Security Council, Ukraine took part in the history-making United Nations mission to East Timor in November 2000. My country is proud to have taken an active part in the international nation-building efforts there. We have contributed a number of officers to the UNMISET civilian police component since its inception, thus assisting in the establishment of an effective Timorese Police Service and promoting its capability.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that UNMISET has succeeded so far in the fulfilment of its mandate and I should like to reiterate Ukraine's continued support for the strenuous efforts of the United Nations and UNMISET in Timor-Leste, as well as Ukraine's readiness to provide all necessary assistance.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting on the situation in Timor-Leste. My thanks go as well to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma, for his useful report.

We appreciate the report of Secretary-General Kofi Annan of 6 November 2002 on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). It provides a comprehensive account of the situation in Timor-Leste six months after it achieved its independence, as well as an account of the activities of UNMISET. The Government of Japan welcomes the fact that Timor-Leste is continuing to make steady nation-building efforts. On the other hand, the country still faces a number of challenges, including the building of a self-sustainable nation, resolution of refugee issues, national reconciliation, and the strengthening of relations with neighbouring States, as described in the Secretary-General's report.

It is said that heaven helps those who help themselves; Timor-Leste is no exception. In the nation-building process, the endeavours of the people of Timor-Leste are of primary importance. It is first of all necessary that they work towards reconstruction and development while promoting national reconciliation so that united efforts for the construction of a self-reliant nation are possible. As long as they continue to make such earnest efforts on their own behalf, it is incumbent upon the international community to continue to assist them, thereby consolidating the achievements that have been realized through assistance extended in the past.

Japan, for its part, has been the largest donor of assistance to Timor-Leste, and intends to continue providing such assistance to the fullest extent possible for self-sustainable nation-building. At the donor conference last May we pledged a contribution of up to $60 million for the coming three years. Japan hopes to make use of bilateral cooperation to realize this contribution, and to this end met with international and non-governmental organizations in Dili on 5 and 6 November to discuss future Japanese assistance for Timor-Leste.

Based upon the deliberations at that meeting, the following day Japan and Timor-Leste held an inter-governmental policy consultation on economic cooperation. During that consultation, Japan expressed its intention to continue providing assistance, with an emphasis on human resources development, agriculture, infrastructure, and peace-building. Furthermore, from the viewpoint of enhancing human security, the Government of Japan is contributing approximately $6 million in the areas of agriculture and community reconstruction through the Trust Fund for Human Security.

I wish to add that the Government of Japan appreciates the activities of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation of Timor-Leste in fostering reconciliation between former pro-independence groups and former pro-integration groups, and has contributed $530,000 to the Commission. National reconciliation is of crucial importance for the future of the country, and we will continue to provide assistance in that area.

We welcome the steady progress that UNMISET has made in implementing the mandates entrusted to it by the Security Council in resolution 1410 (2002). That progress has enabled it to meet the timetables set by the Secretary-General in his previous reports. I am informed that the engineering unit dispatched by Japan is working effectively in cooperation with the people of Timor-Leste. Japan would like to request the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of UNMISET's downsizing plan while evaluating the evolving situation in the field carefully. In so doing, he should continue to consult closely with troop-contributing countries.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Macieira (Portugal): We are grateful to you for convening this open meeting of the Security Council to examine the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, covering the first five months since the independence of Timor-Leste.

The representative of Denmark has already spoken on behalf of the European Union and, of course, of Portugal. I would like to take the opportunity to add a few words on certain issues of particular concern to my delegation.

Portugal extends its strong support to the important efforts and activities of the United Nations under the engaged leadership of Special Representative Kamalesh Sharma, assisting the authorities of Timor-Leste at every level, particularly its emerging institutions, and ensuring sustained momentum in the development and strengthening of infrastructures, public administration, and law enforcement capabilities.

We welcome the well-structured and balanced report of the Secretary-General on the three areas mandated by the Security Council in resolution 1410 (2002). Particularly noteworthy is the focus of the report on the activities undertaken by the Government of Timor-Leste in seeking to promote a broad-based democracy and meet the demands of its citizens by gradually adopting the necessary legal framework and institutionalizing the protection of human rights.

These are important developments, notwithstanding some difficulties still being experienced in the functioning of Timor-Leste's judicial system. Some of these difficulties arise from a

lack of crucial financial and human resources for capacity building. These needs are being addressed constructively, by order of priority and with the assistance of the United Nations, in a Government plan to enhance the justice sector in accordance with the legitimate options of language and legal system established under the constitution of Timor-Leste.

Another issue to be highly commended is the speedy progress on the part of Timor-Leste to ensure good-neighbourly relations with other States of the region, with particular emphasis on the relations with Indonesia.

Timor-Leste has moved quickly towards becoming a member of international organizations, such as the World Bank, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries and the Asian Development Bank. This is a further illustration of its efforts to overcome economic difficulties and begin laying foundations for the future management of its natural resources, that will allow it to produce sufficient revenue to meet its developmental needs in the future.

Until the day that Timor-Leste can rely largely on its own resources, the international community must stay involved, particularly in the areas identified for support, such as stability, democracy and justice, as well as public security, law enforcement, external security and border control. The downsizing of UNMISET must, therefore, proceed accordingly and with extreme caution in order to ensure the consolidation of results already achieved.

Portugal's commitment to Timor-Leste has been and will remain central to our foreign and development aid policies. Our bilateral direct assistance to Timor-Leste totalled $57 million in 2000, $65 million in 2001 and $23 million this year. On the multilateral front, we pledged a total of $50 million at the Tokyo Donors Conference, of which $15 million was disbursed in 2000 and $15 million in April 2002. Another $10 million should be disbursed this year. Last May we pledged an additional $9 million specifically for budget deficit support.

The total involvement is far from exclusively financial. To the contrary, thousands of Portuguese have taken part in UNMISET, and before that, in UNTAET — from peacekeepers and civilian peace observers as the leading troop contributors, to civil servants and simple volunteers from all walks of life contributing what they know to help the people of East Timor help themselves. That commitment of Portugal will continue.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Blazey (Australia): Thank you for convening this open meeting on an issue of deep interest to Australia. I thank Ambassador Sharma for his comprehensive and valuable briefing on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) first six months in operation. I also would like to record Australia's pleasure at seeing Timor-Leste, represented by Ambassador Guterres, participate in this important meeting.

Timor-Leste's participation today as an independent State symbolizes the important fact that this is, ultimately, Timor-Leste's own issue. Our task is simply to assess how well UNMISET has been assisting Timor-Leste strengthen its institutions and make the transition to self-reliant statehood and a more traditional relationship with the donor community.

By all accounts, UNMISET has acquitted itself extremely well. It is largely on track to fulfil its mandate. This has been assisted by the good cooperation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, which is detailed in the Secretary-General's report. Good-neighbourly relations are the bedrock of security in the region. We are gratified to see progress on bilateral dialogue to resolve border demarcation and the constructive first meeting last month of the Indonesia-East Timor Joint Ministerial Commission. We also welcome continuing progress on the refugee issue. Resolving that promptly will mark a very important milestone and will contribute to the long-term stability of Timor-Leste and to its sound relations with Indonesia.

Timor-Leste's establishment of diplomatic relations with nearly all of its neighbours of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), its participation in ASEAN meetings as an invited observer and in Pacific Island Forum meetings as a special observer augur well for its longer-term relationships in the region.

Consistent with a generally improving security environment, the peacekeeping force is on track to meeting its downsizing targets. That is welcome. The

drawdown timetable and associated milestones recommended by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Council are based on sound planning and assessments.

That said, it is also true that trends in the security environment are not linear, and the situation is inherently dynamic. We welcome the recognition in the Secretary-General's report and in Ambassador Sharma's comments that terrorism is an issue that needs careful attention. Following the devastating bomb attack in Bali, this point does not need to be belaboured. But let me underline that, as the region as a whole redoubles its efforts to combat terror, UNMISET, too, must examine carefully how it can assist Timor-Leste to address this international scourge.

In the longer term, the United Nations, including through the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council, needs to consider how best to coordinate and support donor efforts to strengthen and develop Timor Leste's indigenous counter-terrorism capabilities. In this context, I should like to record Australia's appreciation for the professionalism and cooperation we have received in recent times from UNMISET, the Timor-Leste Police Service and the Government of Timor-Leste, in responding to possible terrorist threats.

We consider that assistance, with the development of an effective general policing capability, should be a high priority for UNMISET. We welcome recent efforts in that area by UNMISET. The appointment of a training adviser for the United Nations civilian police and the Timor-Leste Police Service and the planned joint needs assessment mission should help encourage a more strategic and coordinated approach to strengthening the police. This is crucial, and it will have Australia's support.

Closely related to the strengthening of the police is the development of effective border controls. Building capacity in this area goes directly to UNMISET's core security mandate. A porous border could exacerbate internal security problems and undermine regional and global efforts against terrorism and other transborder security challenges.

The need for greater attention to the justice sector is widely acknowledged. I will not go through the details, which are clearly set out in the Secretary-General's report. Suffice it to say that more effort is required to foster efficient and professionally functioning courts and a prison system. Practical solutions will be important. In that context, we also note the importance of the United Nations supporting the work of the Serious Crimes Unit.

Capacity limitations in the justice sector are only one of many that Timor-Leste's administration faces. Building up Timor-Leste's administrative and governance capabilities presents a substantial ongoing challenge and underlines the wisdom of the decision in resolution 1410 (2002) to help Timor-Leste in those areas. Such assistance is, of course, not simply the responsibility of UNMISET. Bilateral and multilateral support remains vital. Australia encourages that, including through donors meeting their pledges in a timely way.

Let me conclude by congratulating Ambassador Sharma and UNMISET on the excellent start they have made in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste. It is true, as Australia has often said, that the United Nations involvement in Timor-Leste has shown the Organization at its best. Australia, for its part, remains committed to assisting Timor-Leste, including through UNMISET, as best it can.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Thailand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand): Allow me to pay tribute to you, Sir, and to China for presiding over the Security Council this month. I join others before me in thanking Ambassador Guterres for his statement and Ambassador Sharma, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his useful briefing on the development and progress achieved in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

We are encouraged by positive developments in Timor-Leste, as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report. Despite resource constraints, the Timor-Leste leadership should be commended for its unwavering determination in consolidating and strengthening the country's foundations within a short span of time since independence. We also commend the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for its continued assistance to the Government of Timor-Leste and its close cooperation with the donor communities, intergovernmental agencies and other United Nations agencies in accordance with Security Council resolution 1410 (2002).

We fully agree with the Secretary-General that the continued engagement of the international community in securing a solid foundation for the long-term stability of Timor-Leste is vital. We therefore urge the donor community to help narrow the resource gaps in such priority areas as public administration and the justice and finance systems, and in other areas as foreseen in the National Development Plan of Timor-Leste.

On the maintenance of peace and security, training assistance for Timorese police and military personnel is still much needed.

We wish to reiterate what we have stressed on many occasions, that the support of the United Nations and the international community in capacity-building is of the highest priority if the Timorese are to attain self-sustainability in the political, economic, social and cultural development of the country.

The downsizing of UNMISET, with a view to a smooth transition to traditional development assistance, must be commensurate with the progress in the development sector, including in the area of employment generation.

For our part, Thailand is willing to render support to the Timorese people in their development effort. Just recently, Thailand sponsored a training course in local administration for a group of Timorese leaders. Various academic institutions in Thailand have now offered scholarships and training programmes to Timorese students. The Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation of the Thai Foreign Ministry has just announced 10 scholarships for Timorese students in the areas of agriculture and health. In that connection, at the end of this month, the director-general of that department will lead a delegation to Dili comprising both the Government and the private sector to discuss further bilateral cooperation and assess the needs of the Timorese in order to formulate a long-term assistance plan. It is envisaged that the plan will primarily focus on education, agriculture and health, and that it could later be expanded to other areas.

Thailand will continue to support the work of UNMISET through its contribution of police and military personnel and through economic assistance. We hope that such contributions, in conjunction with the various assistance programmes, will help foster capacity-building at the grass-roots level for the population of Timor-Leste so that, over time, they can participate in the regional and global economies on an equal footing.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Thailand for his kind words addressed to me and my country.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nambiar (India): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council at this critical juncture in the Council's management of issues relating to international peace and security. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly felicitate the representative of Cameroon for his exemplary stewardship of the Security Council during an unusually active period of time last month.

India attaches great importance to its relations with Timor-Leste. We have sought to contribute to the country's development by providing expertise and training in areas of our competence, and where we see complementarities in their application. To that end, we have offered 50 scholarships to East Timor in technical and economic areas, as well as separate scholarships for study in Indian universities in the areas of agriculture and in the information technology sector, involving the upgrading of skills. India made a statement on this subject during the last meeting of the Security Council on the issue of Timor-Leste, last August. I shall therefore confine my statement on this occasion to a few brief remarks pertaining to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/1223) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

I wish to take this opportunity to formally place on the record of the Council our felicitation to Timor-Leste on its entry into the United Nations as the Organization's 191st Member State. We are happy to see Ambassador Guterres with us at the table.

The Secretary-General's report informs us of the country's accession to other international bodies, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and of its establishment of diplomatic relations with a number of countries. India welcomes those developments. We welcome in particular the growing relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, underscored by the exchange of State visits between

the two countries and the more recent creation of the Joint Border Committee.

The Secretary-General has referred to the fact that the leaders of Timor-Leste have sought, since their independence, to promote a broad-based democracy and to heed concerns or complaints expressed by their citizens. India welcomes the embrace of democracy by Timor-Leste and its steady process of institutionalizing the protection of human rights in the country. Our own commitment to democracy since independence, and the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression enjoyed by all our citizens, leads us to recognize the enormous value and utility of such an exercise for a nation and a people. We wholeheartedly agree with the characterization made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with regard to the leadership of Timor-Leste, specifically as regards President Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and Senior Minister and Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta, as significant assets of that nation at its current historical stage.

UNMISET has to play the role of enabler and facilitator of the larger political, social and economic goals of Timor-Leste. This is a major responsibility and requires the support of the international community. The Secretary-General has referred to unpaid assessments to UNMISET's special account for the period since the inception of the Mission, which amount to $213.6 million. We believe that continued and timely support for UNMISET's budget will greatly enhance its ability to assist Timor-Leste towards self-sufficiency as a nation. There is also need to address the significant shortfall in resources hindering the pressing need to fill posts required to develop capacity in Timor-Leste's public administration.

At the same time, we note that East Timor has been endowed with enormous potential for revenue from its hydrocarbon deposits, commercially exploitable coastline, agricultural base and tourism attributes. These must be exploited in an efficient and environmentally friendly manner, so as to empower the nascent State with the resources required for self-sufficiency and economic independence in the shortest possible period of time.

We note with satisfaction that, during the first three months of the fiscal year 2002-2003, the Government of Timor-Leste successfully collected 23 per cent of its budgeted revenue despite the economic contraction following the withdrawal of a significant international presence. However, the lack of sustainable assets, resulting in unemployment in the range of 90 per cent, and the dependence on international aid continue to beset the nation. These issues need to be addressed.

The Secretary-General has drawn attention to the functioning of the country's justice system. We believe that the concurrent development of the judicial, legislative and executive branches is important for the balanced development of a nation. In addition, the constraints faced owing to the lack of adequate development of the judicial system will also hinder efforts to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes committed in 1999.

We take this opportunity to express our condolences to the families of the two UNMISET peacekeepers who died in last month's bombing in Bali, and to express our solidarity with the members of UNMISET on the loss of their comrades. We note that in his statement the Special Representative of the Secretary-General alluded to the new shadow of terrorism that has fallen over the region. As a country familiar with the consequences of terrorist acts perpetrated without regard for national boundaries or norms of human decency, we agree that enhanced vigilance and improved capacities need to be put in place in Timor-Leste.

Before concluding my statement, I would like to join others who have spoken before me in paying tribute to the dedicated role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who is my predecessor as representative of India, and his team in ensuring UNMISET's contribution and utility to Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers on my list. I shall now give the floor to Mr. Sharma to respond to comments and questions that have been raised.

Mr. Sharma: I wish to express my appreciation to all the delegations that have spoken today. Their views and advice provide extremely important and valuable input in our work. Some of the points that were made need to be accorded greater reflection and scrutiny, and I assure members that we shall do this. The words of support which delegations have spoken for our efforts have been of great encouragement to us, and I shall certainly convey those words to my team,

which supports me so well. I thank delegations for the confidence they have expressed. We hope to live up to it.

I particularly thank the many delegations that have advocated continued and strengthened donor support to Timor-Leste; such partnership will be essential to Timor-Leste for many, many years to come. We rely on this continued commitment and solidarity, which has to date been so generously in evidence from all institutional and national partners and civil society. Many delegations, indeed, have expressed this in their statements.

As I have been kindly invited by you to respond, Mr. President, I shall not abuse your generosity overmuch. I intend to respond very briefly, and I hope my observations are found to be of interest and useful on some of the points which have been common to statements by delegations and on others that were very pointedly put in the form of questions addressed to me. The most important theme, I find, as emphasized by the majority of delegations, is that of justice and the rule of law. I strongly believe that the rule of law is the foundation for all other societal and Government activities. That view is shared by the leaders of Timor-Leste, as I indicated in my statement.

However, we have to recognize that inherent difficulties related to judges' lack of experience, court language and the legal system are, and will remain, a continuing challenge. There will be a continuing long-term need for international assistance, within the Ministry of Justice, the courts and the prison sector, well beyond the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

I have, therefore, been consciously involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other multilateral and bilateral agencies in any initiatives that UNMISET takes in order to promote the objectives of the Government of Timor-Leste in enhancing the functioning of the judicial system. In this, it is important to bear in mind that we can, at best, play the role of adviser and facilitator. The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sukehiro Hasegawa, who is also the UNDP Resident Representative, in consultation with me, has prepared input to the action plan of the Ministry of Justice; this was an extensive document and, I believe, was appreciated. The document set out what we saw as challenges, the way in which those challenges could be met, and who could be the potential partners in meeting those challenges. An outline of the plan, as developed by the Ministry of Justice as a national plan, was presented to donors on 11 October. I should also inform members that we are pursuing our contribution in this sector by deploying needs assessment missions, also coordinated by UNDP.

An assessment team on the prison system visited last month and has already issued an extremely useful report. Currently, there is also an assessment team in the police sector.

A delegation made reference to the Judicial Magistrates Statutes. Here again, I would emphasize that, on the draft legislation, we had made our advice clearly known both to the Government and to Parliament, and we had also invited the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the independence of judges and lawyers, Mr. Param Cumaraswamy, and the Government also had the benefit of his views. An issue was raised about the legality of detentions. This issue is known, and also forms part of the prison assessment report.

The other important theme emphasized by many delegations was the role of human rights and the office of the "Provedor". We have been instrumental in promoting the search for the appropriate role for the "Provedor", and a seminar was arranged on this team. UNMISET has also mainstreamed promotion and protection of human rights in all its activities. It is also working towards the creation of a human rights thematic group, which would involve all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

I should emphasize here that the commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste to human rights is exemplary. Just a few days ago, on 6 November, the Council of Ministers approved the ratification of a number of human rights treaties. These are being considered by the national Parliament with a view to acceding to them by international Human Rights Day on 10 December. These treaties include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the

Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; and many others.

It is significant that among the treaties the Council of Ministers has recommended for signature is the Migrant Workers' Convention. At present, there are 19 signatories to that Convention, and Timor-Leste's signature will have the effect of bringing the Convention into force, since 20 signatures are required.

The Human Rights Unit of UNMISET, in cooperation with other partners, continues to provide training to Timorese authorities, particularly the police. During August and September, a series of three-day courses were organized for offices of the special police unit on human rights and conflict management. Training has also been provided to Timorese police officers and to the vulnerable persons unit of the police in various districts.

In Timor-Leste, there has been a small increase in incidents against returnees. Such incidents are prompted either by allegations of their involvement in militia activities or by their efforts to reclaim land that originally belonged to them. The human rights unit is monitoring the well-being of returnees and is providing assistance where appropriate. Such cases underline the need for continued support for the work of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and also the process — mandated by the Council — of the investigation, prosecution and judgement of serious crimes. The Commission has achieved full strength and has conducted the first reconciliation process in Likisa. Indeed, I visited Likisa and spoke to the Commissioners personally. All of them were united in expressing the view that it would be an important contribution to the process of social healing, to which President Gusmão attaches such enormous importance.

There were some queries raised as to international advisers. I shall not talk about the stability advisers, as most of the questions raised pertained to the development posts. The 228 development posts that have been identified fall within four thematic areas: financial services, which has 73; essential services, such as health, education and transport, which has 68; governance and centralized services, which has 57; and the legal and justice system, which has 30. Of the 228, only 49 have been recruited thus far and another 33 are in the process of being recruited, either by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or by bilateral donors. Expressions of interest have been received from donor agencies for another 48 posts, and, even if all of them materialized, there would be a major shortfall in funding for 98 positions, or nearly half of the entire programme.

The largest funding gaps are currently in the Ministry of Planning and Finance, 24 posts; the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works, 20 posts; and centralized services, particularly translators and legal advisers, 18 posts. We have been queried as to whether there was something that UNMISET could do about the time scale of those development posts. I should clarify that the process depends entirely upon the willingness and the energy with which donors pick up the posts after having examined them. In fact, the full list can be found on a web site — *www.undp.east-timor*.org — and I would encourage all those in a position to do so to contribute to this critical programme.

Many questions were raised concerning the serious-crimes process. Here, something needs to be said immediately and at the outset. UNMISET is playing the role that is appropriate for it: ensuring that all administrative and infrastructure facilities required by the investigators, prosecutors, defence lawyers and courts are made available to them. At the same time, it is acutely aware that it must not interfere — or even appear to interfere — with the legal and judicial processes, which will take their own course. We would be happy to share with any interested delegation the current state of indictments and other details that we have. Here, I should emphasize that the question of the balance between reconciliation and justice is a theme of the utmost importance in many peacekeeping missions, and Timor-Leste is no exception.

There was a reference made to the need for a forensic pathologist. We recognize that need, and we identified it almost immediately after UNMISET had begun its work. I personally met the Minister for Health and officials in the Ministry of Justice in that regard. To have a facility with a professional forensic pathologist requires many years, because a cadre with medical degrees is needed. So what we are also concentrating on is engaging partners — particularly in the neighbourhood — who can make their experts available from time to time so that there is no backlog in the morgue. We are also seeking long-term solutions.

Many references were made to veterans. A prominent grievance has been that treatment accorded to veterans and a lack of programmes devoted to them may give that sector of the population a sense of denial of dignity, worth and social usefulness, which needs to be corrected. That is entirely recognized by the Government. I have discussed the issue with the leaders on several occasions, and, as a result of those discussions, the President has established two commissions to define and determine the exact numbers of former combatants of the period 1974-1979 and Falintil veterans of the period 1979-1999. Prime Minister Alkatiri has also drafted a project proposal for the gainful employment of Falintil veterans. Those ideas are being pursued further through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for consideration by bilateral and multilateral donors. I strongly believe that redressing the genuine grievances of former combatants and of Falintil veterans would contribute to enhancing the stability of Timor-Leste.

References were also made to border demarcation. As that is an issue that is closely connected to UNMISET's mandate, I should like to lay out the situation very clearly for members. The previous report (S/2002/432) estimated, in its paragraph 93, that by July 2003 the border would be demarcated and its management assumed by civilian authorities, including the police. It was further indicated, in paragraph 97, that the process of demarcating the border was at an early stage and that, if there were no delays in the process, the boundary could be determined by the end of 2002 and the international boundary could be demarcated by July 2003. Security Council resolution 1410 (2002), apart from requesting UNMISET to give full effect to the three programmes of the mandate implementation plan, stressed the critical importance of cooperation between the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia, as well as with UNMISET, in particular by working together to secure agreement on the issue of border demarcation.

I am happy to inform the Council that the Government of Indonesia have, in cooperation with UNMISET, attempted to move forward in this direction. The first meeting of the Joint Ministerial Commission for Bilateral Cooperation — held in Jakarta on 7 and 8 October, during which UNMISET actively cooperated with both countries — agreed to invite the Joint Border Committee to make every effort to finalize agreement by 30 June 2003 on a line that constitutes the border in accordance with the 1904 treaty between Portugal and the Netherlands and the 1914 arbitral decision and other relevant legal instruments and in accordance with which the land border can be demarcated unequivocally.

UNMISET is fully prepared to continue its active cooperation with both countries in their efforts to meet the target they have established to finalize this agreement. The first meeting of the renewed Joint Border Committee, which was revived at the Joint Commission, is expected to be held in mid December, and Indonesia and Timor-Leste are in the process of finalizing mutually convenient dates through regular diplomatic channels.

Of course, after the agreement on the line that constitutes the border has been finalized, the process of physical demarcation — if both countries decide to do so — may take a fairly long time. However, once the agreement on the border has been secured, with militia threats maintained at current low levels and civilian management of the border assured by concerned authorities, I do not believe that absence of physical demarcation should impede the withdrawal of peacekeeping forces. I believe that you would be able to maintain a schedule for withdrawal of peacekeeping forces.

Refugees have also been mentioned by many delegations. So far, the year 2002 has seen over 29,900 refugee returns to Timor-Leste, as compared to some 18,000 during 2001.

While the year began on a slow note, with 675 and 938 refugee returns being recorded in January and February, the rate picked up considerably in March, with 3,644, and almost doubled to 6,031 in April following encouragement by the then President-elect Xanana Gusmão during his visit to Atambour and Kefah along with UNMISET and UNHCR on 4 April. The high momentum of returns was maintained in May, June, July and August, when more than 4,000 refugees returned. In July there were, in fact, more than 5,000. However, since the first of September, the rate of return has slowed to a trickle, with 119 returns in September, 37 in October and 72 so far in November, of whom 52 returned only yesterday.

However, it has to be recognized that the repatriation of refugees to Timor-Leste has been a veritable success story. Out of about 260,000 refugees, nearly 223,000 have returned to Timor-Leste since the

refugee repatriation movements assisted by UNHCR and IOM began three years ago. This figure must be seen in perspective. As I mentioned in my statement, it represents a return of over 25 per cent of the entire population of Timor-Leste.

The return of refugees is motivated by several factors, such as reconciliation meetings and the work of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation. After the latest visit, over three days, by President Gusmão and others, there is the expectation that the process of refugee return will pick up.

With regard to relations with Indonesia, which was alluded to by many delegations, I am happy to state that this core relationship, guided by the political leadership in both countries, is developing in a most cooperative and mutually beneficial manner. The visit of President Megawati to Timor-Leste for the Independence Day celebration and that of President Gusmão to Indonesia on 2 and 3 July — when the Joint Ministerial Commission was constituted — and an early meeting of the Commission on 8 and 9 October and the positive results achieved in the Commission are to be saluted. In this connection I would like to express my deep gratitude for the gracious reception accorded to me by the leadership of Indonesia in the course of my visit.

A reference was made to a phase five in West Timor. I believe that this issue is being discussed between the United Nations Security Coordinator and the Government of Indonesia.

Another point raised concerned assets and compensation. A reference was made to the zero option in this connection. It is true that some statements were made earlier in which the zero option was recommended from the side of the Government of Timor-Leste as a possible solution. However, during the recent meeting of the Joint Commission this matter was further discussed, and I wish to inform the Council that the meeting agreed to seek comprehensive solutions in the interests of further strengthening cooperation between close neighbours on residual legal matters such as assets — private, individual, corporate and government. In addition, both parties agreed in principle to find innovative settlements on corporate assets through conversion of those assets for Indonesian investment, including joint ventures. Both parties have agreed to hold a technical meeting within six months, before the second meeting of the Joint Commission. We can greet this forward-looking decisions.

On the question of delimitation of land and sea borders, which was also referred to, I would like to state that, at the same meeting of the Joint Commission, it was decided that the two issues should be treated separately. The Joint Border Committee was revived in order to attend to the question of the land border, on which I have already given the details, but it was decided that issues relating to marine affairs would be relegated to another subcommittee of the Joint Commission because marine affairs involve many issues which should be attended to holistically, such as environment and pollution, fisheries, the economic zone, piracy and shipping issues.

On the issue of benchmarking, the question was raised of whether we would be able to follow the excellent example of Mr. Michael Steiner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo. Here, I would like to provide the clarification that we are, indeed, developing and assessing the benchmarks for UNMISET's mandates, and we would be happy to share them. But I trust that the distinction will be appreciated that, with the emergence of a sovereign and independent Timor-Leste, the benchmarks for the country as a whole should be those that it decides for itself. They are nonetheless fairly precise, specific and measurable, and are contained in the National Development Plan of Timor-Leste, copies of which can be easily procured.

One delegation asked whether we could shed some light on the current economic and budgetary situation. UNMISET tries to be extremely active in promoting various forms of useful economic activity and in giving such advice as we think would be appropriate, even in the economic field. With regard to the specific matter of the budgetary and economic situation, however, I would suggest that a better and, certainly, more reliable source would be the institutions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. I will be discussing this requirement, expressed by delegations, and we will be indicating on our web site — which I trust representatives will find interesting in its own right — how that information can be accessed by those who are interested. The address of the site is www.unmiset.org.

You will be relieved, Mr. President, to know that I am now drawing to a close. I thought I should speak at some length because of the great engagement of the various delegations that have spoken. I trust that the few comments that I have made have been useful for delegations.

In conclusion, I would like just to allude to observations made by one delegation that Timor-Leste has an advantage in being a latecomer among the comity of nations, inasmuch as it can learn from the mistakes of others. That is a very pertinent observation. The current leadership of that country is in a unique and historic position. Surely it will be considering the work that it does now from the perspective of how it will be seen in about 20 years' time, when people look back at the country's history and see the direction that the first leadership gave to it. I am confident that the vision that must be demonstrated to the country and the world will, indeed, be there — now and for later generations.

The same delegation said that we must get the pace of transition right, and I would like to conclude on that point. We have to ensure not only that UNMISET does its work satisfactorily but also that it prepares the ground for a transition that is seamless and painless and that propels the nation of Timor-Leste forward with confidence, socially, politically and economically.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Sharma for his clarifications and explanations, which were very detailed. I think that they will help us to gain a comprehensive picture of the situation in Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank him for providing us with the UNMISET web-site address; I will certainly log on and visit it after the meeting.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4647

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4647th meeting

Thursday, 21 November 2002, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mrs. d'Achon
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

Letter dated 31 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/287)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-70338 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 31 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations (S/1998/287)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Dauth (Australia), Mr. Naidu (Fiji) and Mr. MacKay (New Zealand) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Prendergast: During the last briefing on Bougainville, on 29 August, the Council was informed of progress achieved in implementing stages I and II of the weapons disposal plan, the target dates for which were 31 August and 30 September, respectively. As the Security Council may recall, the forward movement in the peace process was welcomed by the Council.

I have to report today that developments since August have included setbacks. The Bougainville parties have completed stage I. However, stage II containment has been completed in only half of the districts on the island. The number of new weapons collected since the last briefing grew only by a little more than 100, reaching a total of 1,684. More worrying still, seven containers were opened and 212 weapons removed from them. I shall say more about this later. The momentum for weapons disposal has definitely slowed down, and, as a result, the entire peace process has come under some strain.

It may be helpful if I give our assessment of what lies behind these developments. I would also like to inform the Council of what steps are being taken to address the difficulties that have arisen.

The setbacks in weapons containment can be explained essentially by two factors. The first lies in well-intended efforts to address the impatience of many ex-combatants, who are frustrated with the slow pace of their reintegration and rehabilitation. Two funds were created to assist the ex-combatants, one by the national Government and one by a bilateral donor. Problems related to disbursement from these funds and the erroneous perception that ex-combatants would now, in effect, be paid for turning in their weapons has led some of them to refuse to participate in the weapons-disposal process. Other broke into containers and retrieved their weapons.

The second factor has been a deliberate campaign of falsification and misrepresentation regarding the nature of the peace process by the followers of Francis Ona, the main Bougainvillian leader remaining outside of the peace process. Some people calling themselves Ona's affiliates or supporters have also broken into containers and stolen weapons, claiming that they were acting on his orders.

Discouraging as these developments are, I am pleased to report that, to the great credit of the ex-combatant leaders, they have responded with vigour to these challenges. A Peace Process Consultative Committee meeting was held in Arawa on 30 October. The meeting, chaired, as usual, by the United Nations mission — the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) — adopted a number of

decisions designed to make containers more secure, to foster more positive attitudes to weapons containment, and to place weapons collection back on track. Decisions were also taken to address problems related to usage of the two funds mentioned earlier. We were encouraged by the decision of former combatants to complete stage II containment by 24 December, declaring this to be a Christmas present for Bougainville.

As a follow-up to the Peace Process Consultative Committee and the decision on the new deadline for stage II containment, the two Bougainville faction leaders convened an extraordinary session in Arawa at the beginning of November. Participation extended beyond the usual Peace Process Consultative Committee membership to include unit, platoon and company commanders, as well as the provincial Administration. At this session, the participants received a briefing on all aspects of the Peace Agreement, examined issues which were impeding weapons collection and took corresponding actions. The session adopted a joint ex-combatants resolution that, among other things, called for their political leadership to enter into dialogue with the Me'ekamui Defence Force of Francis Ona. Following the Peace Process Consultative Committee meeting and the subsequent extraordinary session, the ex-combatants initiated direct contact with the military commander of Francis Ona.

The ex-combatants also adopted a detailed calendar of activities to be completed throughout the island leading up to 24 December, when the close of stage II containment should be declared. It is understood that the Alpha Company, the core of the Me'ekamui Defence Force, which has reaffirmed its commitment to work along with the other districts in weapons disposal, could take a bit longer to reach stage II. UNPOB is expected to witness the signing of the declarations that individual districts will make confirming that they have completed stage II.

Meanwhile, beginning in September, UNPOB held a series of meetings throughout the island with the chiefs, with churches and with women's groups. The purpose of those encounters was to mobilize and engage these important groups in order to promote maximum community participation in the weapons-disposal process.

In all of its activities relating to weapons collection, UNPOB has enjoyed a close and fruitful working relationship with the Peace Monitoring Group. The Peace Monitoring Group has provided valuable logistical support to the collection of weapons and their storage. It has also served as a reliable link among the various communities of the island. Thanks to its island-wide patrols, the Monitoring Group brings to UNPOB's attention particular issues requiring our joint intervention. In addition, the Group facilitates the settling of many cases on its own. We very much look forward to continued fruitful cooperation with the Peace Monitoring Group.

I might say a word about the Bougainville Constitutional Commission. The Commission has been consulting with the people of the various districts of the island to ascertain their views on what should be the content of the Bougainville constitution. The Commission is expected to produce the first draft constitution by 1 January 2003. Following that, consultations will be held with the Bougainville interim provincial government, the Bougainville People's Congress and, of course, the national Government. The target date for the completion of the final draft constitution and for a report on it is the end of January 2003.

The draft constitution will then be considered by the Constituent Assembly, which is expected to be established by February 2003 and to complete its work by March 2003. However, the actual start of its work will, among other things, depend on the verification by UNPOB of the satisfactory completion of stage II of weapons containment.

A word about the challenges ahead: I ought to point out that little more than four weeks remain before the 24 December deadline set for the completion of stage II of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. At the last Peace Process Consultative Committee meeting and the follow-up session, UNPOB sent a very clear message to the ex-combatants that the credibility of weapons disposal and, perhaps, of the entire peace process would be at stake if the deadline were not met. We also re-emphasized that progress towards autonomy depended on the completion of stage II and on its verification.

Even if the ex-combatants were to declare that the 24 December target date had been met, UNPOB would still have to verify and certify that the weapons had,

indeed, been committed to containers, as called for by the plan. This process, on current form, seems most unlikely to be completed by 31 December, especially in view of the recent break-ins and the stealing of 212 weapons. UNPOB's continued presence will be needed on the island to help Bougainvilleans return those weapons and complete stage II, including certification by UNPOB. Stage III of the weapons disposal plan, at which time the parties must decide on the final fate of the weapons, is still ahead. A decision on the fate of the weapons is to be made within four and a half months after the coming into force of the constitutional amendments. UNPOB is required to be available to verify and certify whether there has been substantial compliance by the parties in the handing in of weapons and whether the level of security of the weapons creates a situation which is conducive to the holding of elections. Assuming, therefore, that the December target date is respected, UNPOB needs to have a reasonable amount of time to verify and to certify stage II containment.

Finally, the Peace Process Consultative Committee meeting held at the end of October formally requested that UNPOB and the Peace Monitoring Group remain on Bougainville until after the elections for the autonomous government have been held. According to the current timetable, these elections should be held before the end of June 2003. But, naturally, the actual date will depend on the extent to which the Bougainville Constitutional Commission and the Constituent Assembly stick to their present programmes of work.

In view of the critical tasks to be performed by UNPOB in the coming year, the Secretary-General has, as the Council knows, written to the Council recommending the extension of UNPOB's mandate for a further year. We fully expect that all of the stages in the peace process will be completed during that period. As the Council is also aware, the Government of Papua New Guinea has requested such an extension. Before deciding to write to the Council, the Secretary-General dispatched an assessment mission to Bougainville. The mission, led by the Director of the Asia and Pacific Division of my Department, arrived on the island in time to attend the Peace Process Consultative Committee meeting. The mission held wide-ranging consultations with the Papua New Guinea Government, the Bougainville parties and the countries participating in the Peace Monitoring Group, all of whom confirmed that the continued presence of UNPOB was essential for the successful completion of the peace process.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, my country welcomes your return, Sir, and the fact that you are presiding over this public meeting of the Security Council. We congratulate China on the political process it conducted through its Party Congress.

My delegation wants to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Kieran Prendergast, for the information he has just given the Council in his briefing on developments in the situation in Bougainville. I also wish to express my country's recognition of the work of the representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Noel Sinclair, head of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville, and of his staff. We also recognize the work and support of Governments that have participated in the Peace Monitoring Group: the Governments of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu.

I also reiterate Mexico's support for the peace process and our wish that all the parties concerned will continue to work for a peaceful and definitive solution to the conflict. We also support continued cooperation by the United Nations and the international community as a whole with the Bougainville authorities in order to achieve the economic and social recovery of that country.

In that context, my country emphasizes how important it would be for the Security Council to appeal to donor countries to support the establishment of the economic and social conditions and infrastructure conducive to consolidating a peaceful transition towards Bougainville's political future.

My country is concerned at the delays and obstacles to the process in Bougainville, on which Mr. Prendergast has fully briefed us. We believe that it is essential that this process be completed and that it would be desirable to conclude the process within the deadlines established for it. One crucial element for meeting those deadlines is the complete implementation of the weapons disposal plan which is under way, in the circumstances that have been reported to us.

There are therefore a few questions that we would like to ask Mr. Prendergast on the possible impact of that delay. We wish to emphasize the possible impact

that a delay in weapons collection might have on the very process of drafting the constitution and on the establishment of the autonomous government. What would be the consequences of a delay in the work of the Consultative Committee and of a delay in meeting the deadlines set for the adoption of the constitution and the holding of elections leading to establishment of autonomous government, taking into consideration that elections are planned to be held, as Mr. Prendergast recalled, by the end of June 2003? Some authorities in Papua New Guinea, for example the Minister for Inter-Governmental Affairs, have said that as of now it seems unlikely that that date will be met. What are the prospects in view of this likely failure to meet this schedule, and what would be the consequences of the above-mentioned delay on the conclusion of the work of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) and of the Peace Monitoring Group?

In addition, my Government wonders what might happen if some members of the Peace Monitoring Group were to withdraw before the scheduled dates. Once again we thank Under-Secretary Prendergast for the information he has given us.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the representative of Mexico for his kind words addressed to me and my country.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Welcome, again, to New York. My country would like to hail the determination and the sense of political responsibility of the leadership of Papua New Guinea and also the peace efforts made, especially by Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, who are giving substantial assistance in the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and are helping to assure political stability in Bougainville.

Considerable progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Peace Agreement signed on 30 August 2001, and this should be welcomed. The Peace Agreement constitutes indisputable success for the people of Bougainville, as well as for Papua New Guinea, which has clearly shown its good will in settling the conflict in a peaceful and democratic manner.

Bulgaria also welcomes the adoption of the legislative acts for the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially the amendments to the constitution and basic law regarding peace talks in Bougainville. While we note with satisfaction the progress achieved for the implementation of the weapons disposal plan, my delegation is still concerned over information given us by Sir Kieran regarding some difficulties in the process, which is, however, essential for organizing elections in order to set up an autonomous Bougainville government. These are important safeguards for the holding of a referendum on the future of Bougainville.

Bulgaria supports the joint efforts of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) and the Peace Monitoring Group, as well as the efforts of the parties to find clear-cut criteria for implementing stage II of the weapons disposal plan.

Finally, Bulgaria welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the office for a one-year period. This will enable us to ensure the implementation of stage II of the weapons disposal plan, organize elections for an autonomous Bougainville government, and complete the peace process.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Like other delegations, let me thank you, Sir, for convening this open meeting today on Bougainville. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Sir Kieran Prendergast, for his useful and comprehensive briefing on developments in the Bougainville peace process.

We commend the authorities and the people of Bougainville for their continuing commitment to implement the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Bougainville is yet another concrete example where the Security Council and the international community, and especially the neighbouring countries, are playing a significant role in taking the peace process forward.

We take particular note of the progress towards achievement of the goals set in the Peace Agreement, signed at Arawa on 30 August 2001. We are happy to learn that agreements have now been concluded on the issue of a referendum to determine the eventual political future of Bougainville, within the framework of the constitution of Papua New Guinea.

We share the view that the peace process is on the right track, despite some setbacks. The Bougainville Peace Agreement is indeed a major watershed in the political history of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea.

My delegation wishes to express its appreciation and support to the United Nations Political Office in

Bougainville (UNPOB) which, despite its small size, has done a remarkable job in actively coordinating, implementing and carrying out the agreed weapons disposal plan. We are happy to note that, despite practical difficulties, UNPOB has successfully carried out the stage I process in the weapons disposal plan. We are, however, concerned about the information Sir Kieran has just given us on the growing number of incidents in which trunks and containers have been forced open and guns removed. These incidents would negatively impact on the good work performed by UNPOB and the Peace Monitoring Group and can risk derailing the whole process, thereby hampering the completion of stage II. We commend, however, the initiatives undertaken by the senior commanders, both from the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Bougainville Resistance Forces, in investigating, advising and encouraging the offenders to return these weapons. We hope those responsible will do so in the interest of peace and stability.

The progress in weapons disposal is inextricably linked to the establishment of the autonomous Bougainville government by the legal device which makes the provision on autonomy and referendum in the new part XIV of the national constitution conditional upon verification and certification by UNPOB that stage II of the agreed weapons disposal plan has been achieved. It is therefore extremely important for everyone to ensure the completion of the weapons disposal plan. We are pleased to note that a total of 1,684 guns have so far been disposed of, including 301 high-powered factory made weapons. We urge the people of Bougainville to strictly respect the provisions of the Plan and put aside political and other differences in the spirit of community building.

As in any peace process, reconciliation and the reintegration of ex-combatants remain absolute priorities to ensure long term and sustainable peace. The early reintegration of former combatants and their engagement into gainful employment should therefore be addressed urgently. We appreciate the setting up of the Bougainville Ex-Combatants Trust Fund account, established under AusAID. We encourage the donor communities to inject more funds into this programme for its effective implementation.

The peace-building process in Bougainville cannot be realizable without heavy investment in the reconstruction of the infrastructure and the restoration of civil authority. My delegation recognizes and welcomes the desire of the Bougainville people to participate actively in the rebuilding of their province. It is therefore important that priority be given to health, education, agriculture and basic infrastructure. No peace dividend would be possible without progress in these fields. We appeal to the international community to provide assistance in this regard.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that there has been significant progress, even though the initial timetable has not been respected due to circumstances not attributable to the responsibility of the parties in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. We strongly believe that the Security Council must continue to remain fully engaged in the process and we therefore support the request of the Government of Papua New Guinea, as well as the decision of the Secretary-General, to extend the mandate of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville, which expires on 31 December 2002, for a further 12-month period.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): First, I would also like to thank Sir Kieran for his briefing on recent developments in the Bougainville peace process. In spite of recent setbacks and challenges that need to be addressed, the overall impression is that the process continues on the right track and that it has now reached its final stages.

We are pleased to note that the United Nations, through the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB), is maintaining its vital role in promoting peace and stability on the island. In addition to overseeing implementation of the weapons disposal plan, UNPOB and the Peace Monitoring Group are instrumental in terms of encouraging mutual trust and confidence between the parties.

My delegation takes the view that sustained peace-building efforts are crucial in any comprehensive strategy aimed at achieving durable peace. The scope of peace-building activities currently being undertaken by different actors in Bougainville covers a variety of initiatives, from reconciliation of former enemies to reintegration of ex-combatants and the promotion of development and economic recovery. However, the successful implementation of those initiatives depends, to a large extent, on the agreed weapons disposal plan being fully implemented. Moreover, only through an appropriate arrangement as to the final fate of the weapons will there be conditions conducive to the

effective implementation of autonomy and the provisions for a referendum in the Agreement, and for the autonomous Bougainville Government to be established.

As a means of promoting those goals and safeguarding the investments already made in Bougainville, my delegation supports the extension of UNPOB's mandate until the end of 2003. That will allow the United Nations Office to oversee the implementation of the pending components of the Peace Agreement, and thereby to contribute to the final sealing of the peace process.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage the Government of Papua New Guinea and its Bougainville counterparts to remain committed to the peace process and to do their utmost to keep it on track through its last stage. Particular emphasis should be placed on overcoming current obstacles to effective weapons disposal relating, inter alia, to logistics, communications and mobilization.

Finally, all parties need to engage in long-term planning in order to promote peaceful coexistence, thereby making the current process more self-sustaining.

Bougainville is not a major item on the agenda of the Security Council. It is, nevertheless, a vivid example of the constructive role the United Nations can play in a comprehensive peace-building strategy, even with relatively small resources. Allow me therefore to end by paying tribute to UNPOB for the very good work the Office is undertaking, and to the members of the Peace Monitoring Group for their valuable support for United Nations efforts in Bougainville.

Mr. Williamson (United States of America): Following Papua New Guinea's independence in 1975, large segments of the population on the island of Bougainville continued to feel separate from Port Moresby owing to historical, cultural and ethnic concerns. The development of the copper mine in the 1980s became a complicating factor. In 1989 fighting broke out, and during the 1990s bitter separatist fighting took place on the island of Bougainville that claimed thousands of lives.

In 1998, after nearly a decade of conflict and with nearly 10,000 dead by some accounts, the parties admirably chose to resolve their differences through negotiation. Since its creation, in 1998, the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) has played a valuable role in facilitating the return of stability to the island. The Bougainville Peace Agreement successfully ended the fighting, preserved the peace that began four years ago, and put the island on track to autonomy and a referendum on independence.

The key remaining task for UNPOB is to reduce the risk of re-incitement of violence by collecting, storing and disposing of weapons on the island. The Bougainville Peace Agreement envisioned that UNPOB would complete its work around the middle, and not later, than the end of 2002. A year ago, when the Security Council discussed a similar request for a 12-month extension of UNPOB's mandate, we were informed by UNPOB's Director, Ambassador Noel Sinclair, that the mission was expected to conclude "not later than the end of 2002". We believe goals need to be set based on accurate projections and, once they are set, everything possible should be done to try to achieve them.

The Council is now being asked to endorse an additional year beyond that target end-date. We understand that the reasons that have been cited for the delay include a loss of momentum in the peace process owing to national elections in Papua New Guinea, an incident of looting of some of the arms collected and containerized as part of the arms disposal process and occasional inclement weather, which has kept UNPOB's helicopter grounded. Frankly, we do not find this to be a particularly compelling case for another 12-month extension.

We note that progress towards greater autonomy and a referendum cannot be made until UNPOB has certified the completion of stage II of the arms disposal process, namely, the containerization of all collected arms. We applaud the good work that UNPOB has done in facilitating the collection and storage of over 1,500 weapons so far this year. At the same time, we would like to see a clearer and more measured indication from the Secretariat of the end-game for weapons disposal and the exit strategy for the UNPOB mission as a whole. We wonder, for example, how many weapons are there left to collect; what UNPOB's plan is, on a weekly basis, to achieve the collection and disposal of all remaining weapons; and how UNPOB will draw down its presence as the end of the mission approaches.

Again, the United States supports the peace process. We applaud the sincere efforts by the leaders on all sides of this conflict to resolve their differences through a peaceful process. We appreciate the efforts of UNPOB to contribute to the successful, peaceful completion of this process.

This morning Under-Secretary-General Prendergast noted other considerations that may justify a year-long extension of UNPOB, matters that warrant our consideration and review. We note that UNPOB's mandate does not expire until December 31, and suggest that the Security Council meet at a later date, perhaps early next month, to consider this issue further. The United States preliminary view is that a six-month extension of UNPOB's mandate is adequate. In the coming days, we would hope to get answers to the questions raised, and to better understand the other considerations raised this morning.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the situation in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. I would also like to express our gratitude to Sir Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his briefing this morning on the evolution of the peace process in Bougainville and on the role played by the United Nations in that regard. We also welcome among us the new Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea, who will later shed more light on the peace process.

Undoubtedly, over a year after the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, that territory has begun to move slowly towards building genuine peace, as envisioned in the Agreement of 30 August 2001, which was based on the three pillars of autonomy, referendum and weapons disposal. All of these tracks are intertwined. In this respect, we must recognize the great impact of two factors for success in the Bougainville peace process.

The first factor is the sincere efforts made by the Government of Papua New Guinea and its commitment to pursue the peace process. We must also acknowledge its achievements in completing all constitutional and legal measures in order to give the Bougainville Peace Agreement its legal status within the constitution of Papua New Guinea. This is a commendable achievement, and it should be supported.

The second factor is the important role played by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) and the Peace Monitoring Group in their efforts to facilitate the implementation of the Peace Agreement. This role merits our appreciation and support.

In view of the role played by UNPOB at this critical stage, and because of its active involvement in coordinating the implementation and consolidation of the responsibilities agreed upon — especially as the weapons disposal plan is reaching its second stage, to be completed on 24 December 2002 — Syria strongly supports the request of the Papua New Guinea Government that UNPOB's mandate be extended for a further 12 months, until the end of 2003.

The information given to us this morning on the peace process in Bougainville, the note from the Government of Papua New Guinea dated 26 August 2002, the ministerial statement by that country's Inter-Government Relations Minister before the Parliament, and the last memorandum of 20 November, which we just received, all clearly show the progress made towards restoring normalcy in Bougainville. This is the prevailing situation, despite some references to challenges, mainly by some parties such as Francis Ona outside the peace process, on the one hand, and the rehabilitation and development of the infrastructure, provision of services and attainment of economic development, on the other. In this regard, we think it is essential that international assistance by the donor States be continued and that the international community continue to fulfill its obligations.

In conclusion, we call for the redoubling of peace and rehabilitation efforts in Bougainville. We think that UNPOB still has contributions to make in the post-conflict phase, and therefore we feel that the 12-month extension is justified and should be supported. Thus, we must support and maintain UNPOB's work until the completion of its mandate.

Mr. How (Singapore): Like previous speakers, I thank Under-Secretary-General Sir Kieran for his briefing.

We commend the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) for the role it has played and continues to play in Bougainville. Ambassador Sinclair and his small team have not only helped to make possible a significant level of stability and security in Bougainville, but also have slowly but gradually

moved the conflict towards resolution. We also applaud the unwavering support and assistance extended by Papua New Guinea's neighbours towards this end.

Since the signing of the Peace Agreement in August 2001, the Papua New Guinea Government has demonstrated its commitment to the Agreement in very concrete ways. For example, it has delivered on its undertaking to make the necessary constitutional amendments to enshrine its agreements with the Bougainville parties, clearing the way for subsequent steps of the Peace Agreement to proceed. The Government is also working closely with UNPOB and other parties in the Peace Process Consultative Committee (PPCC) to implement the Agreement on the ground.

We are also heartened by the ministerial statement delivered by Papua New Guinea's Minister for Inter-Government Relations, Sir Peter Barter, two days ago. From his statement to the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea, it is clear not only that the Government is fully committed to the Bougainville Peace Agreement, but that it has a good appreciation of the obstacles in the way and of what needs to be done to overcome them. There can be no doubt that the Papua New Guinea Government deserves the continued support of the international community as it strives to implement the Agreement.

The Bougainville file has for some time now been a source of encouragement for Council members. This is because it reminds us that our efforts in this Council can, and often do, produce the desired results. It is all the more gratifying if we note the small outlay involved. UNPOB costs around $2 million per annum, not much more than what many other United Nations missions spend in a day. This is a very small price to pay to help the Government of Papua New Guinea resolve the Bougainville conflict and to bring peace, and with it the hope of a brighter future to some 180,000 people on the island.

This morning we heard that the implementation of stage II of the weapons disposal plan has been slower than expected. We should not be overly concerned about this, as long as it remains clear to us that all parties remain committed and that the delay does not threaten the peace process.

It is important that we not insist on fitting the implementation of the weapons disposal plan and the peace process as a whole to too rigid a time frame. An approach taking into consideration the problems on the ground, as well as local sensitivities and practices, is likely to serve us better. We therefore endorse the Secretary-General's intention to extend UNPOB's mandate by one year, to December 2003, to accommodate delays encountered during stage II of the weapons disposal plan.

Finally, it is not sufficient that peace be restored to Bougainville. For this peace to be sustainable, an effective administration and a viable local economy must be in place. Relevant United Nations agencies should therefore closely coordinate their efforts in Bougainville with donor countries in order to achieve peace and consolidate the peace.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation)(*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation attaches great significance to the Bougainville Peace Agreement of 30 August 2001, which is a basis for the peace process in that country. We call upon all the parties to undertake timely and full implementation of the tasks set forth in the Agreement to establish autonomy, to conduct a referendum and to carry out steps for the collection and destruction of weapons.

A most important condition for progress in the peace process is a demonstration by the parties of political will and the desire to achieve a speedy solution to basic problems in the settlement of the conflict.

We highly value the efforts of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) and the activities of its head, Ambassador Sinclair, as well as the Military Observer Group, to promote the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. We note the effectiveness of the work of UNPOB, which, over a short period of time and with limited resources, has been able to achieve significant results.

The delay in the implementation of the weapons collection and destruction plan in Bougainville is a cause for concern. We hope that all the parties, with the active support of the Government of Papua New Guinea, will intensify their efforts to eliminate weapons in the communities of Bougainville. Success in that area will have a decisive impact on progress in the post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building processes in Bougainville and can help to establish favourable conditions for the international community's provision of necessary economic assistance to tens of thousands of Bougainvilleans.

Russia supports the positive efforts being undertaken to achieve a final settlement of the conflict in Bougainville, and it is prepared to contribute to future progress in that process.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): I should like to join previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for having organized this public meeting on Bougainville. I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to Sir Kieran Prendergast for his very useful briefing.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement, signed on 30 August 2001, emphasized three fundamental elements: autonomy, the holding of a referendum and a plan to eliminate arms in circulation. Since then, the Council has consistently encouraged the parties to implement those components in order to reach a final settlement of their dispute.

My delegation notes that, beyond several problems related to the collection of weapons and to the demobilization of combatants, the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement is proceeding normally. The achievements already attained have been made possible not only by the goodwill shown by the parties, but also by the important support provided by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) and by the Peace Monitoring Group.

Here, we should like to thank all the countries and the institutions that are so involved in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Thanks to those joint efforts, we can take a positive view of the actions undertaken to promote national reconciliation, the restoration of State authority and the reconstruction and economic development of the country.

While we encourage the various actors to redouble their efforts, my delegation would like to stress the need to accelerate the operations to collect, store and destroy weapons. In fact, we remain convinced that that is one of the essential conditions for restoring peace and fostering post-conflict recovery with the international community's kind support. In order to do that, the public awareness policy should be pursued with greater energy. Moreover, my delegation would like to urge the parties to continue their efforts to establish a genuine national reconciliation policy and an autonomous government in Bougainville.

I cannot conclude without expressing my delegation's support for the Secretary-General's proposal to extend UNPOB'S mandate for another 12-month period, beginning in 1 January 2003. We remain confident that that will greatly benefit the completion of the peace process undertaken in Papua New Guinea, which will be another success to the credit of the United Nations.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): First of all, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for arranging today's open meeting. It is especially important to hear the views of the countries in the region and to thank them for their engagement and cooperation in the peace process. Like previous speakers, I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Prendergast for his comprehensive briefing on the peace process in Bougainville.

Ireland strongly supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General and the request of the Government of Papua New Guinea that the mandate of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) be extended for another 12 months. Prime Minister Somare said earlier this month that promising peace is no longer enough; we must help people realize the practical potential of peace. The Prime Minister reaffirmed that the peace process remains a national priority. My delegation warmly welcomes that commitment.

The meeting of the Peace Process Consultative Committee, held in Arawa on 30 October, agreed on a new target date of 24 December for completion of stage II of the agreed weapons disposal plan. It is now important that all sides make rapid progress towards meeting that goal, given a recent lack of momentum in the weapons disposal process, as we heard from Sir Kieran Prendergast this morning.

In that area, of course, UNPOB has a critical role to play, since its verification and certification roles become the trigger for implementation of agreed arrangements for autonomy and for the guarantee of a referendum among Bougainvilleans on Bougainville's political future. There is now a good prospect that stage III of weapons disposal — a decision on the final phase of the weapons, which would see most, if not all, of them destroyed — can be completed by the middle of 2003, thus allowing for elections for an autonomous government in Bougainville.

It remains essential that the United Nations maintain its full support and engagement with regard to

the process now well under way. Much progress has already been achieved, including on the amnesty and pardons issue. The Bougainville Constitutional Commission has been at work consulting the people of Bougainville, and it will soon begin to draft the Bougainville Constitution. All of that progress must continue.

The United Nations Political Office in Bougainville is extremely modest in terms of resources and personnel, as the representative of Singapore pointed out. Under the leadership of Ambassador Sinclair, it has done an excellent job in meeting its goals and in working to build peace and to advance agreed objectives, especially with regard to weapons disposal. There will always be some moves backward and forward in such an interlinked political and disarmament process; what is important is to maintain clarity of focus on the task ahead. UNPOB does that admirably.

UNPOB's finishing its work is something that matters to the people of Bougainville, of Papua New Guinea and of the region. At small financial cost but with great gains for peace, UNPOB remains critical to the completion of the process. We should therefore focus, not on rigid time frames, but on benchmarks in how it completes that work, and by that standard it is doing very well. Today, it is also right to express particular appreciation to the Peace Monitoring Group countries — Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu — for their crucial contribution to and work in the process.

The year ahead will be an active one for United Nations engagement in Bougainville. Stages II and III of the weapons disposal process and the critical determination that the United Nations must make in certifying that the process is complete will be major challenges. The pre-election period will also be a time when sound judgement and advice will be called for. In addition, as Ambassador Koonjul and others have pointed out this morning, the extremely bleak economic situation of Bougainville is a factor of which the international community, including the United Nations agencies, will have to take substantial account in the year ahead. What is important now is to maintain our full support for the peace process and to allow UNPOB to finish its work.

Mrs. d'Achon (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting, and to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast for his very useful briefing.

It is clear from Sir Kieran's briefing that, after the encouraging progress in the first half of this year, the peace process in Bougainville has recently experienced delays and difficulties. We see three reasons for this. First of all, delays in the weapons collection plan could delay the peace process as a whole. Completion of stage II was scheduled for September and that has been extended to 24 December. Secondly, there is the fragility of the mechanisms for compensation and reintegration, which has led to some frustration. The Governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia have promised sizeable sums for the parties and this is an element that is vital to the success of the process. We hope that these amounts will soon be able to be used in a balanced way for disarmament, compensation and also development purposes.

Thirdly, there have been weapons stolen for compensation purposes. This causes delay in the arms collection. We share the analysis of the Secretariat that this is not a sign that the fighting will resume, but rather a sign of a wish to obtain funds and that wish should not be encouraged.

The period that lies ahead will be decisive. The deadline of 24 December for weapons collection is a date that must be respected if we are not to see the peace process endangered and the two other sectors at an impasse. In this respect, Sir Kieran mentioned the prospect of elections in the second half of 2003 and I would like to take up a question that was raised by the Ambassador of Mexico in this regard. In Sir Kieran's opinion, will the time periods be met for stage III and what could the Political Office do so that the elections can be held as scheduled?

There are other elements besides the peace process. Prospects have improved somewhat with the establishment of a weapons collections system by the Alpha Company based on the Bougainville Agreement. But many problems remain. As many delegations have said, there is the refusal of Francis Ona to come back into the peace process.

And lastly, and here again I am repeating what other speakers have said before me, the economic situation is still serious on the island and this could jeopardize the prospects for lasting peace. The mobilization of the international community remains more necessary than ever. It is in this context that the

Security Council must consider the question of mandate renewal for the Political Office.

The French delegation feels that two elements need to be taken into account. First, the Political Office is playing a major role in the peace process. Given the important deadlines coming up in the first half of 2003, it seems hard to imagine that the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville should not be present at that time. On the other hand, we do not want to encourage extensive delays in the process. The mandate was to come to an end at the end of 2002, according to the original agreement, so we would like to see the extension of the mandate accompanied by important progress to make up for the delays.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): May I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this public meeting on Bougainville. I would also like to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast for his very informative briefing, especially on the issue of Bougainville. During the briefing of the Council of 29 August, we welcomed the progress achieved. Similarly, in his report on the work of the Organization to the current General Assembly, the Secretary-General emphasized the progress achieved in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement signed on 30 August 2001, as well as the essential role played by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) in the destruction of collected weapons. This was an operation in which a well-informed population cooperated fully. Since then, there have been some setbacks and Sir Kieran has given us some information on the difficulties which in the view of my delegation, should not at all discourage the efforts under way, given the importance of the approaching deadlines in this operation, especially the elections in June 2003.

The decision of the former combatants to conclude the operation by December and the agreement to cooperate on the part of Mee' Kamui in the elimination of weapons are encouraging and hopeful. At this stage, I would like to say how much my delegation appreciates the quality and effectiveness of the cooperation between UNPOB and the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, who are neighbours and who have been providing contingents for the Peace Monitoring Group for the implementation of the truce and the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

We see this as a significant illustration of positive interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations, something we most earnestly desire. Success is, of course, partial, although we welcome it. It is the result both of the determination of the parties to settle their disputes peacefully and also of the intervention of the international community, especially the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum group of States. I agree with the United States delegation that we need a road map to enable us to have an overall view of efforts that are still needed to achieve the final objectives of the process under way.

This momentum towards peace should be sustained and supported. This is why Cameroon will give its full support to the extension of the mandate of UNPOB, whose essential role is recognized by all parties. Similarly, Cameroon agrees with the Secretary-General's proposal to extend UNPOB's mandate by 12 months.

My delegation would also like to thank the donor community for their valuable financial contributions, as well as the relevant activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations in achieving the Bougainville process and in the many areas of reconstruction. We would encourage them to continue with their efforts and to strengthen their joint participation in this lofty common endeavour for the dawning of peace and sustainable development that will no doubt benefit the entire region.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the support of my delegation to UNPOB and all of its staff and reiterate our encouragement of their tireless efforts.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I want first of all to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast for the valuable information he has given us and for the data sheet circulated. This is undoubtedly a very useful tool to keep this Council up-to-date.

On several occasions, we have received first-hand information from the head of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) on the progress in the peace process in Bougainville. In December of last year we received good news about the Peace Agreement that was signed in Arawa in August 2001 and the three components of the Agreement: autonomy, the referendum and the weapons collection programme. On that occasion, the members of the Security Council welcomed the signing of that Agreement.

Adoption by parliament on 27 March in a second round of the constitutional reforms needed for the adoption of the peace agreement was an important step and was highlighted as such by the Security Council. In this regard, we must recognize the positive role that UNPOB has played under Ambassador Noel Sinclair. Members of the Security Council, including our own delegation, have underscored the importance of the prompt and effective implementation of the weapons collection plan. Nonetheless, as has rightly been mentioned, the weapons disposal plan has been stagnating, and all indications are that it will be difficult to complete that process within the new time frame. The account given by Sir Kieran Prendergast in his briefing would seem to bear that out, as the impatience of former combatants and the campaign to discredit the process seem inauspicious in that respect.

Another matter of concern — this, too, was mentioned in earlier statements — is the economic situation in Bougainville, as well as in Papua New Guinea in general. With regard to the economic situation in Bougainville, it has been said that what little there was has been destroyed by the armed conflict. At present, there is no medium-sized or large-scale industry, but merely a subsistence economy. In the past, Ambassador Sinclair has been emphatic in saying that a failure to improve the economic situation would have a negative impact on the attitude of the population towards the Peace Agreement and would make it more difficult to reintegrate former combatants.

Since the signing of the Lincoln Agreement in January 1998, the peace process in Papua New Guinea has been making slow but steady progress. We hope that that trend will not be reversed now. The new Government of Sir Michael Somare is also committed to implementing the Agreement. The international community must continue to support this process. In this regard, we also want to acknowledge the work that has been done by the members of the Peace Monitoring Group — Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Vanuatu.

The weapons disposal plan is of considerable importance. Some progress has been made, but we know that a great deal remains to be done. Under the Arawa Agreement, UNPOB must certify that the weapons have been collected as a precondition for the holding of the referendum in Bougainville.

Having said this, we support the extension of the mandate of UNPOB in terms that will ensure that a further contribution can be made to the process.

Mr. Harrison (United Kingdom): I should like, through you, Mr. President, to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast for his very useful and informative introduction to our discussion.

We start from the basis that the United Nations operation in Bougainville has been, and is, a notable success. My delegation would like to repeat the tributes that we have paid in the past to Ambassador Sinclair and his team; we believe that the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) has been not just a success but, perhaps, a model for other operations throughout the world. The United Nations in this case has made a real difference to the political problems of Bougainville.

It is important not to jeopardize that success by a precipitate end to the United Nations contribution in Bougainville. But equally, we believe that it is very important for us to start thinking about a clear exit strategy that will define what is needed in the future from the United Nations, as well as the period over which it is needed. In this context, we are studying carefully the aide-memoire that the delegation of Papua New Guinea circulated yesterday, 20 November.

The peace process is clearly still at a vulnerable stage. I think that Sir Kieran's phrase — he said that it was "under some strain" — sums it up well. It is clear that the United Nations work in Bougainville is incomplete. It is important that the dire economic situation in Papua New Guinea and the instability elsewhere — for example in the southern highlands — not put at risk the progress that has been made on Bougainville.

It is also good news that the combatants have agreed to work towards the deadline of 24 December, and it is important for that deadline to be respected. We remain concerned that weapons collection remains some way from completion, although of course 100 per cent elimination is probably impossible. Weapons that have circulated to the southern highlands could just as easily return. But we are pleased that UNPOB's focus is now moving towards rehabilitation, and we have been happy to switch a contribution of 25,000 pounds, which was surplus to requirements for weapons collection, to rehabilitation projects instead.

We have noted carefully the Secretary-General's recommendation that UNPOB's mandate be extended, and we support that extension. We also note the results of the recent assessment mission. As regards the timing of any extension, we have an open mind at the moment. We believe that the issue needs further discussion. But we think that a number of important issues will need to be taken into account in considering the timing. The first is, of course, the need for an exit strategy, to which I alluded earlier. The second is a point raised by Sir Kieran Prendergast about the time that UNPOB will need in order to verify stage II and work further on that aspect. The third is the elections that are due in June next year but which may, indeed, be postponed. I think that it will be important for Council members to consider those and all other relevant issues before coming to a decision on the exact timing.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

First of all, I should like to thank Under-Secretary-General Prendergast for his briefing. Since the deliberations of the Security Council in August this year, the peace process in Bougainville has, with the cooperation of the new Government of Papua New Guinea, been steadily moving forward, and China is gratified by that. We hope that all sides will continue to take a positive and flexible position and advance the process of the eventual peaceful settlement of the Bougainville question. All sides are comprehensively implementing the relevant provisions of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. On the whole, significant progress has been achieved with regard to weapons collection, although some problems have cropped up in this work. Whether or not that task can continue to be carried out smoothly will have a great impact on the peace process.

The United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) has always played an important role in weapons collection. It has also won the trust of all sides. At the moment, the collection work has not been completed and the peace process is at a crucial point. In view of this, China supports full consideration of the request made by the parties concerned. We support the extension of the mandate of UNPOB for one year so that the Political Office can continue to play its proper role in the peace process. Over a long period, the Political Office, under the leadership of Ambassador Sinclair, has done very effective work. China wishes to express its appreciation for that and we will, as in the past, support the efforts of the Office in this regard.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Papua New Guinea, on whom I now call.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I, like previous speakers, would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open meeting and for giving me the opportunity to speak on this issue of great importance to my country. I would also like to thank Sir Kieran Prendergast for his briefing at this meeting, as well as each and every one of the members for their constructive and helpful comments.

The conflict that has plagued my country for the past 10 years has been the preoccupation of four consecutive Governments, which have devoted much time and energy and many resources to it. The peace process has, of course, been given the highest priority and attention by all previous Governments — especially the most recent — as well as by the current Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Sir Michael Somare.

It also gives me great pleasure to inform the Council that positive progress has been made on the three principal fronts: peace and reconciliation; arms disposal; and constitutional reforms — this last issue being an unprecedented achievement, as there was no provision or precedent appropriate to Bougainville's post-conflict situation within the constitutional framework of Papua New Guinea.

The Council is well aware that under the previous Government, the former Minister for Bougainville Affairs, Sir Moi Avei, introduced the proposed constitutional amendments and the Organic Law in Parliament in January and March 2002. On that occasion, the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea voted overwhelmingly in support of the proposed constitutional amendments to add part XIV to the national Constitution and to bring into effect the new Organic Law on Peace-Building in Bougainville — Autonomous Bougainville Government and Bougainville Referendum. No votes were cast against the amendments, which showed the

very high priority and utmost seriousness given to the issue by the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea.

The votes required two-thirds absolute majority of the 109 members of the national Parliament. The recorded votes were 84 and 86, respectively, with no dissenting vote.

All parties to the Bougainville Peace Agreement as well as regional and international friends and agencies, including the United Nations observer mission in Bougainville, headed by Ambassador Noel Sinclair, are working earnestly, with unity of purpose, to consolidate and build peace on the ground. I wish to express our gratitude to Ambassador Noel Sinclair for the wonderful job that he has done in helping Papua New Guinea in this process.

I wish also to place on record our gratitude for the regional initiative from our close friends and neighbours, especially the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Tonga, in the early stages, for their continued support and involvement in the regional Peace Monitoring Group on the island of Bougainville.

My Government also recognizes the involvement of many other Governments and international organizations and agencies that have come forward in the provision of assistance in respect to peace-building, reconciliation and restoration, and other sectoral development assistance to Bougainville. These include the Governments of Japan and of the United Kingdom; the European Union; the United Nations Development Programme; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and non-governmental organizations such as churches, the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières.

Here in New York, the efforts of many, including those of the members of the Security Council, the Pacific Islands Forum missions and others, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General and the United Nations observer mission in Bougainville, are providing the necessary catalytic role in managing the dialogue process between all affected parties.

I should also like to thank the Secretary-General, all States Members of the United Nations, especially those immediate past and present members of the Security Council, for continuing to renew the mandate of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB), so that it can support arms collection and disposal.

I need not repeat the excellent exposition given here by Sir Kieran Prendergast when he presented the Secretary-General's report. Suffice it to say that my Government confirms that the first and second stages of the arms collection are progressing well and nearing completion. Stage III of the arms-disposal process remains to be accomplished. We all agree that this aspect is a very important part of the peace process.

I wish also to express my Government's sincere gratitude for the Council's continued support of our request for the mandate of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville to be extended. We are appearing today once again to request the same for another, and final, 12 months.

The proposed timetable set out in the August 2002 aide- mémoire still stands, but, as can be noted by the Council, it has slowed somewhat due to many factors, including those mentioned this morning by Sir Kieran. But we believe that there are definite milestones outlined in that aide-mémoire, supplemented by the aide-mémoire that has been circulated this morning, to ensure a proper exit by the parties. Therefore, the Government of Papua New Guinea is confident and optimistic that the issue will be resolved by the time requested, or, hopefully earlier.

This was also aptly reaffirmed by the Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, during his meeting with the Secretary- General, Mr. Kofi Annan, in New York on 18 October 2002.

In conclusion, we believe that this peace mission can be a success if we all work together.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): I wish to thank you, Sir, for holding this open-format meeting on an issue which, obviously enough, is of deep interest to the countries of the Pacific Islands Forum. It is only appropriate, surely, that the countries of our region, as contributors to the resolution of the Bougainville conflict, should also be involved in the Security Council's deliberations. We also very much appreciate the very useful and comprehensive briefing provided by Kieran Prendergast this morning. We want to thank

him and his team for the efforts they are making, in difficult circumstances, to bring this conflict to a close.

Australia strongly supports the continued engagement of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB). We are encouraged by the progress achieved in the Bougainville settlement efforts. Much has been achieved; nevertheless, a good deal remains to be done before the peace process will be complete. The involvement of the United Nations has been, and remains, an essential element of the overall process, and it will be important that the United Nations remain engaged well into 2003.

But the presence of the United Nations needs to be genuinely catalytic; it should be a spur to the parties to re-energize and successfully conclude, for example, the weapons-disposal process. The parties must understand that the presence of the United Nations and that of the Peace Monitoring Group is of a limited duration. Every effort should be made while they are on the ground to accelerate progress. Under no circumstances should their presence — comforting though it might be — become the cause of delay or of putting back hard decisions. The Group's presence cannot and should not substitute for committed implementation by the parties of peace and weapons-disposal measures.

In this context, the recent slowdown in weapons disposal and the removal of weapons from containers has been, unquestionably, a setback. It risks undermining the confidence that the parties and the international community have in the peace process. That said, opportunities exist, and must be taken, to re-energize weapons-disposal efforts, especially through UNPOB and the parties urging all ex-combatants to conclude weapons disposal and destruction as soon as possible in 2003. Bougainvillean ex-combatants have identified 24 December 2002 as a target date for the conclusion of stage II of the weapons-disposal process. We welcome that decision.

The target may be achievable, but it will require UNPOB, in consultation with the parties, to redouble its efforts to speed up stage II containment efforts and help bring about the earliest possible declaration that this stage of the weapons-disposal process is complete.

The final fate of the weapons — stage III — is to be decided within four and a half months of the stage II declaration. We believe that, unless current rates of progress are lifted substantially, UNPOB will have little prospect of concluding its work until late in 2003. UNPOB has monitoring and verification responsibilities for contained weapons throughout stage III. It will be important for the success and integrity of settlement efforts that this process be advanced expeditiously. It will be difficult for the United Nations to depart while weapons remain in containers under its lock and key.

The declaration by UNPOB that stage II has been completed is the trigger for the constitutional amendments giving force to the autonomy provisions of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. UNPOB has recommended a Bougainville-wide consultation process to determine the general level of security felt in the respective districts. That is a sensible proposal. It would be helpful, however, if the process were undertaken concurrently with stage II containments.

It goes without saying, of course, that the views of the Papua New Guinea Government will also be a factor in the acceptance by all parties of the validity of any stage II declaration. UNPOB will need to consult closely and early with the Government of Papua New Guinea to ensure that its definition of "substantial compliance" is accepted by all parties, including the Papua New Guinea Government.

I want to conclude by underlining Australia's support for the Bougainville peace process and for UNPOB, including through the Peace Monitoring Group. It is precisely because we want to see the process brought to a successful and durable conclusion that we have emphasized the need for a redoubling of efforts to make progress on weapons disposal. This will also enable the other downstream benefits of peace, not least, of course, economic development and autonomy, to begin to make a real and welcome difference to what have been the blighted lives of the people of Bougainville for far too long.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Fiji. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Naidu (Fiji): I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to speak at this meeting on the very important issue of the Bougainville peace process in Papua New Guinea. I make this statement on behalf of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum that are Members of the United Nations, including Australia, Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands,

the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji.

This issue has been on the agenda of the Security Council since 1999 but has, of course, affected one of our neighbouring countries, Papua New Guinea, for a much longer time. Consecutive Governments in Papua New Guinea have given the highest priority and greatest attention to this issue, including the current Government of Prime Minister The Right Honourable Sir Michael Somare.

The Security Council is well aware that our subregion has played a significant role in supporting Papua New Guinea through our own regional initiative of a Peace Monitoring Group on Bougainville. We are all determined to see the successful conclusion of the current peace process, which shows all positive signs of success. As the Council is well aware, through the efforts and resources of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and ably supported by the Kingdom of Tonga and Solomon Islands — in the early stages — and Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji, we mounted and have continued the regional Peace Monitoring Group efforts.

It therefore gives me pleasure to learn from the Secretary-General and our Papua New Guinean colleague, Ambassador Robert Aisi, that positive progress has been made on the three principal fronts: peace and reconciliation, arms disposal and constitutional reforms. It is also heartening to learn that regional and international friends and agencies, including the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOV), headed by Ambassador Noel Sinclair, are working diligently to consolidate peace.

We recognize the involvement of other Governments and international non-governmental organizations, organizations and agencies in providing assistance to peace-building, reconciliation, restoration and other sectoral development assistance to Bougainville. They include the Governments of Japan and the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme, churches, non-governmental organizations, the Red Cross and Doctors Without Frontiers. Here in New York, the efforts of many, including the members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and UNPOV, are providing the necessary catalytic role in managing the dialogue process among all affected parties.

Although the proposed timetable set out in the Papua New Guinea Government's August 2002 aide-memoire has slowed somewhat, we very much hope that stage II of the weapons disposal can be completed as now planned, by 24 December. There is also a good prospect that stage III of the weapons disposal can be completed by the middle of 2003, thus paving the way for elections for an autonomous Bougainville government.

It must be emphasised, however, that meeting deadlines for weapons disposal will not happen automatically. It will require energy and the firm commitment of all the parties and the continued active engagement of the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville in facilitating the peace process.

While we as a subregion remain committed to supporting the Peace Monitoring Group until the peace process is firmly established, it is in the interest of all of us to move forward as quickly as possible and to see the process become increasingly autonomous as it draws to a successful conclusion. Against that background, the Pacific Islands Forum Group supports the extension of the UNPOB mandate for whatever period is required.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): Mr. President, allow me to join the others who have expressed appreciation to you for holding this open meeting of the Council, and also to Sir Kieran Prendergast for the very comprehensive and, in our view, very accurate reflection of the situation on the ground in Bougainville.

My delegation is, of course, associated with the statement made by the delegation of Fiji. This is, as has been noted, a process in which we and other members of the region have now been involved for a number of years. As our colleague from Papua New Guinea has said, the process has slowed a little due to a number of factors, but we nevertheless remain very encouraged by the progress which has been made. More remains to be done, but things are certainly heading very much in the right direction. This reflects a great deal of input from

the Government of Papua New Guinea, assisted by others within the region over the years.

In our own assessment, we see the peace process now entering its final stages. We think that there is, in fact, a reasonable prospect of a general completion of stage II of weapons disposal by 24 December this year. We also think that there is a good prospect that stage III can be completed by the middle of next year, thus paving the way for elections for an autonomous Bougainville government.

We very much agree with the view that has been expressed — unanimously expressed, I think — that the Peace Monitoring Group has a vital role to play until the peace process is firmly bedded in. We appreciated the expressions of support from members of the Council for an extension of the mandate of the Peace Monitoring Group for a further 12 months. We note this is also the period being sought by Papua New Guinea. We believe this 12-month period, recommended by the Secretary-General and requested by Papua New Guinea, has gained wide support within the Council. It is, in fact, the correct and appropriate period for an extension, and we would ask the Council to proceed accordingly on that basis.

Thank you again, Sir, for convening this meeting. It is a very useful opportunity for those of us from the region to participate in what is for us a crucial debate on a hugely important issue, not only for Papua New Guinea, but also for the rest of us from the region.

The President (spoke in Chinese): I now give the floor to Mr. Prendergast, to respond to comments and questions raised.

Mr. Prendergast: There have been a lot of questions and I will try to answer as many of them as I can. First, let me say we are very grateful for the many expressions of appreciation for the work of Noel Sinclair and his team. I know they work in very difficult conditions. It has been quite disruptive for them. For example I had to ask Noel Sinclair to cancel his participation in the meeting we had last month in Mont Pellerin, Switzerland, of representatives and special representatives of the Secretary-General, because of the timetable. We may have to ask him to cancel his Christmas leave for the same reason, and I know he and his team work with enormous dedication.

The first question was from the Ambassador of Mexico about the impact of the delay in certification of containment of weapons, the completion of stage II. If you would like to look at the aide memoire circulated by the Ambassador of New Guinea yesterday, you will find at the top of page 3, confirmation that the operation of the provisions on autonomy, in the Papua New Guinea constitution, and the guarantee of a referendum among Bougainvilleans on Bougainville's political future, which are in part XIV of that constitution, depend on verification and certification by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) that stage II of the agreed weapons disposal plan has been achieved. Obviously the practical implication is that weapons disposal must be completed before the regional autonomous government can be elected. Delay in completing the weapons disposal plan will inevitably mean delay in holding the elections.

The Ambassador of Mexico's second question was about the 30 June 2003 target. I think for reasons already explained, it is going to be difficult to meet that deadline, but we very much hope the delay will not be long. The Ambassador had a third question about the consequences of withdrawal of the Peace Monitoring Group. Our view would be that Papua New Guinea has a clear and irreplaceable role in weapons disposal and it would be very difficult, not impossible, but very difficult to complete weapons disposal without them. The Peace Monitoring Group is less centrally involved, less relevant to other aspects of the exercise, such as elections and the drafting of the constitution.

The second group of questions involve whether it is right or necessary to extend UNPOB for 12 months, when the Council was told by Ambassador Sinclair a while ago that the exercise would be completed by the end of 2002. Unfortunately, I think we know from much of the business of this Council that international affairs do not unroll in a tidy, predictable and mechanical way. As Robert Burns said "The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men gang aft agley". I do not think anyone can argue that Bougainville was unique or even unusual in this. The Council has been quite understanding, in other conflicts, of the fact that timetables slip. I think it would be particularly unfortunate if the Council were not understanding in the case of a small operation in a country which is far from the centre of world affairs, whereas it is understanding in the case of countries which are more centrally situated, particularly since, as the Ambassador of Singapore mentioned, the cost of the operation for a whole year is very little more than the

cost of the operation of larger missions for one day. If my memory serves me right, for example, United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) costs about $1.63 million per day. We have certainly had delays in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and not only there.

We agree very much that there needs to be an exit strategy, there need to be benchmarks and the parties need to be kept to their obligations, but I think we need to recognize at the same time that progress in these matters is not linear. I think our preoccupation should be with the benchmarks and with pressing the parties to keep to those benchmarks, rather than trying to set more or less arbitrary timetables.

We would argue that the exit strategy should be linked to the election of an autonomous government, as indicated in the Bougainville Peace Agreement. There are concrete plans which have been made by Bougainvilleans themselves to complete weapons disposal by 24 December 2002. I described the two meetings that were held to that effect in my statement.

The Mission has concrete plans for carrying out certification and verification of stage II once it has been completed, and we would be happy to provide details of that.

If I may talk you through the arguments as to why, in our opinion, it will be necessary to have a 12-month extension to complete the process, rather than six months, I think the first point is that if the parties to the Bougainville Peace Agreement complete stage II by 24 December 2002, certification of the completion of that part of the weapons disposal plan could not begin until the Alfa Company of Francis Ona reconciles with its neighbours and contains its weapons as well. That means all of Bougainville could only be covered by stage II of the weapons disposal plan by March 2003.

Certification of stage II of the weapons disposal plan would require UNPOB to consult all Bougainville communities regarding their views and perceptions of the Peace Process in general and of implementation of the weapons disposal plan in particular. The objective of those consultations will be to establish whether, at the grassroots level, people feel safe and secure and conditions are conducive to holding the elections for the Bougainville autonomous government. We estimate it could take up to three months to finish this exercise, assuming the weather would allow the use of helicopters. We are in an environment where there is very little infrastructure, particularly transport infrastructure and therefore we are heavily dependent on use of the helicopter to get around Bougainville.

On that timetable, by say May or June 2003, the certification should be submitted to the Papua New Guinea Government and then preparations could begin for holding the elections for an autonomous Bougainville government.

I think we would argue — and I have done so already — that the withdrawal of UNPOB should be tied to the election of a Bougainville autonomous government. As we see it today, that seems likely to take place only in the second half of 2003. Past United Nations experience in other areas shows that the mission should stay for a little while after the election, as a confidence-building measure, prior to its disengagement. If we take all of that as a whole, we would conclude that, with good luck and some determination and effort, the peace process ought to become irreversible by the end of next year, which would trigger the withdrawal of UNPOB.

I do not want to give the Council too many British maxims, but there is another one about not spoiling the ship for a ha'p'orth of tar. We have come a long way, and I think it is worthwhile seeing this process through to the end. In the time that I have been working in the Secretariat, one has seen instances where the Council has not stayed the course; and we are having to live with the consequences of that. I am thinking, for example, of the Central African Republic, where there is a very wide perception that peacekeepers were put in reluctantly and withdrawn prematurely — meaning therefore that we more or less guaranteed the failure of the post-conflict period. I think it would be a great pity to do that in Bougainville, when we are talking about an operation that costs about $2 million for a whole year.

The President *(spoke in Chinese)*: I thank Mr. Prendergast for the clarifications and answers he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4648

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 November 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4648th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 21 November 2002, at 3.30 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 21 November 2002, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4648th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Joachim Hütter, Director of the Europe and Latin America Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations."

02-70511 (E) 211102

United Nations S/PV.4649

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4649th meeting

Monday, 25 November 2002, 6.15 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Ramjuttun
	Mexico	Mr. Rodríguez Zahar
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus.

The report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2002/1243)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-70944 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 6.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2002/1243)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of item 2 on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1243, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2002/1277, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I should like to inform the Council that, in my capacity as President of the Security Council, I have met the representatives of the parties, who have confirmed to me that they maintain their well known positions vis-à-vis the item on the Council's agenda. On the basis of those meetings, as President, with the consent of the members of the Council, I have drawn the conclusion that the Council can proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution before it.

If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1442 (2002).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4650

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4650th meeting

Monday, 25 November 2002, 7.10 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Ramjuttun
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Bhatia
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 7 and 8 of Security Council resolution 1409 (2002) (S/2002/1239)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-70957 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 7.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 7 and 8 of Security Council resolution 1409 (2002) (S/2002/1239)

The President *(spoke in Chinese)*: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1239, which contains the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 7 and 8 of Security Council resolution 1409 (2002).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2002/1293, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Bulgaria and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(spoke in Chinese)*: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1443 (2002).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4651

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4651 st meeting

Wednesday, 27 November 2002, 11.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mrs. d'Achon
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mrs. Napaul
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

02-71373 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhádi (Afghanistan), took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1278, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the Council's prior consultations.

I should also like to draw attention to the following documents: S/2002/1196, which contains a letter dated 21 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, and S/2002/1296, which contains a letter dated 25 November 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council transmitting a joint letter from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Germany and the Netherlands.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1444 (2002).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.